DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 581 FL 015 297

TITLE	TECFORS: A Newsletter for Instructors of Writing and Reading to ESL and Bi-Lingual Adult Students. Volume 7, 1984.
INSTITUTION	Houston Univ., TX. Dept. of English.
PUB DATE	84
NOTE	69p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Department of English, Attention: Nancy Lee, University of Houston, Houston, TX 77004 ($4.00 per year; $7.00, two years).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)
JOURNAL CIT	TECFORS; v7 n1-5 Jan-Nov 1984
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Students; Bilingual Students; *Classroom Techniques; Culture Conflict; *English (Second Language); English for Special Purposes; Grading; Individualized Instruction; Language Research; Language Styles; *Reading Instruction; Remedial Reading; Second Language Instruction; *Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS	Asians

ABSTRACT

Numbers 1 through 5 of the 1984 TECFORS newsletter include these articles: "The Skills that Cannot Wait: Improving the Academic Performance of Underprepared Students through Integrated Curriculum" (Laurel Corona); "Meeting Culture Shock Head On," part 2 (Michele Molinaire); "Directing First Language Reading Research toward Second Language Comprehension" (Kerry Segel); "Process or Product? An Exercise in Both" (Linda Yoder); "Methods for Teaching Academic Writing" (Daniel M. Horowitz, Macey B. McKee); "The Reader, the Task, and the Interaction" (Kerry Segel); "Some Pragmatic Dimensions of ESL Writing Tutorials" (William Acton); "Pre-Reading: A Neglected Skill in Lower- Level ESL Classes?" (Vivian Hefley, Roberta Vann); "Using Student Essays: Some Issues for ESL and Remedial Composition Classes" (Ann M. Johns); "When Asians Write: What to Expect in Rhetoric" (Mark Picus); "A Systematic Approach to Gerund/Infinitive Complements" (Mary Lindeman); "Designer Grading: Tailored for ESL and Developmental Students" (Dorothy Farris Findlen); and "Using Anticipation Guides" (Patsy Arnold Martin). (MSE)

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

Volume VII January 1984 — Number 1

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THE SKILLS THAT CANNOT WAIT: IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS THROUGH INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

Laurel Corona
Educational Opportunity Program
San Diego State University

You have probably had this experience: You work with a student when she first arrives at your university. Her English skills are very weak--perhaps because of interference from another language, perhaps because of an overall poor academic background, perhaps because of both. She improves quickly, but not fast enough. Just as her grades begin to creep towards the "C"s that will keep her alive in the university, the cumulative load of deficient grades puts an end to her college career. She flunks out. This student exemplifies what for many university writing teachers is the most frustrating and distressing part of their jobs.

Most students like the one above do not feel that they have the luxury of waiting to start college until their skills are at the level they would like. Once in college they must take university-level courses they are not skilled enough to manage, while they go about taking every writing development course they can find. Obviously their chances for success in their first content courses are very slim, and will remain so until their verbal skills reach college level. Hence, the real question that faces skills development faculty and concerned administrators is how to foster the most growth in the least time, so that attrition can be minimized.

The answer is clear: Wherever possible we must teach students skills within the contexts of the actual academic classes they are taking. It is difficult to do this effectively and efficiently in standard composition classes because not all students face the same requirements and deadlines. Although writing teachers may have ample knowledge of many of the subjects their students are taking, teachers have little if any information about other professors' assignments or their teaching methods. Hence, in the standard writing class advice must necessarily be general and is often untimely; thus students do not receive the amount of academic assistance they need. Because it is likely that writing classes taught in isolation from other courses will continue to be the norm, research should be encouraged which would sharpen the academic focus of these courses. But as the success of the Educational Opportunity Program and Academic Skills Center's joint efforts in the Integrated English Skills/General Education Program at San Diego State University shows, it is far more effective to create comprehensive skills development packages which integrate writing and reading classes with actual content courses the students are taking.

The Integrated English Skills/General Education (GE) Program is a self-contained system. It works by placing a group of approximately 25 students in a writing and a reading class suited to their ability. These

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students all take GE class together and attend two additional hours of study groups weekly. A tutor sits in on the GE class and serves as a classroom assistant in the writing and reading classes.

There are many benefits for students working with integrated curriculum. They see the relevance of the skills classes to their immediate success, and attend class faithfully without coaxing or threats, thus getting maximum benefit from classroom time. Students learn how to use their peers as resources and often study together. The most obvious payoffs for students are generally higher grades in the content classes they take together, and increased confidence that they know how to succeed in college.

But the gains for English teachers who teach integrated curriculum are impressive as well. In standard composition classes if a teacher wishes to have students write on an article or respond to a video presentation, valuable class time and homework hours must be taken up with familiarizing students with the material, time which could be spent in instruction more clearly related to the writing goals of the course. Teachers must also spend time researching what materials to use and scheduling their class time and assignments to accommodate these supplemental materials. In this program concrete subject matter is provided continually to the teacher without any expenditure of her time in planning what the materials will be and how they will be scheduled. Class and homework hours can be spent directly on task instead of on preparatory activities not directly involving writing. This added source of material and increased amount of time to spend on writing opens up a whole range of possibilities to the teacher who is willing to be flexible and creative in "instant curriculum" writing. To illustrate this new approach, a quick summary follows of some of the curriculum developed in the Integrated English Skills/GE Program to date.

On a daily basis, most writing instructors require the students to account for the material of the GE lecture. In most classes this takes the form of a ten minute lecture summary at the beginning of the English class. Other classes are asked to list ten to twenty things they learned in the lecture and rank them in various ways(e.g. most to least important, most general to most specific, most concrete to most abstract). Assignments such as these help students develop the ability to generalize, synthesize, prioritize and summarize material. Working within time constraints helps students overcome fear of the blank page and forces them to become efficient writers and good judges of how much attention they can give to any one thing and still finish in the allotted time. Most students get very good at these tasks, which are direct training for timed essays in other classes.

Several teachers use GE material as a way of demonstrating the various rhetorical methods for idea development. Students of World Mythology compared and contrasted various flood narratives. Students of Mexican history divided and classified the racial groups in colonial Mexico. Students of World Religions developed their own definition of religion. Students of Natural Science developed definitions of solubility and characteristic properties and used these definitions to write an essay on the significance to the chemist of solubility as a characteristic property. To learn the techniques of causal analysis, American history students wrote on the significance of the Atlantic Ocean on American colonization.

Teachers also use the GE material as a way of helping students learn how to move from generalizations to specifics, how to support ideas and how to stick to a thesis. Several teachers also used GE material to help students with sentence-level mechanics. One teacher using psychology materials showed students how the semi-colon "balances" a sentence by having students write sentences in which a statement about Freud is conjoined with a statement about Jung.

Assignments involving point of view and personal voice are also popular among English teachers working with GE material. While Political Science students were reading a"saturation report" about Detroit blue collar workers, the English teacher had students do a saturation study of a small group with which they were intimate. Students of Cultural Anthropology drew up wills disposing of a list of items such

as a family heirloom, a car, some cash, and determining custody of their hypothetical children. How relatives fared in their decisions helped them understand their perspective on kinship. When studying various kinship systems, students were asked to be Dear Abby and respond to a letter from a woman who was about to marry her first cousin and wanted to know how to break the news to the aunt who controlled the family fortune. Students had to write two responses. First Abby was to be an Iroquois Indian. Second Abby was to be an Eskimo. Students thus learned both how to manipulate voice in writing, and how to distinguish cross-cousin and matrilineal descent systems, all through the same assignment.

These writing tasks represent only a small portion of the curriculum developed by English teachers in this program. Students also take a reading class coordinated with the same writing and GE classes, wherein they learn how to master their textbooks for the current semester and develop skills to help them in future courses.

Data to this point shows that the 500 students who have participated in this program to date have lower attrition, probation and disqualifications rates than similarly prepared students in previous years. Although this program was not specifically designed for non-native speakers, many EOP students are bilingual or bidialectical. This program should be effective for a ESL population because its two major concerns--rapid development of skills, and direct applicability to academic courses-- are the same. Ann Johns and I have recently applied for funding to develop a task hierarchy for GE classes which would help English teachers see more concretely what skills they can teach through integrated curriculum. The funding we seek would also allow us to publish a compendium of curriculum developed to date. Such materials would be of use to anyone who would like to replicate or adapt this program. If our funding bid is successful, we will share our findings with you in future issues of TECFORS.

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MEETING CULTURE SHOCK HEAD ON

Part II

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Note: This is the concluding section of the article on culture shock, the first part of which appeared in the November 1983 issue of TECFORS. For a copy of the references for this article, please write the author: Michele Molinaire, Griffin College, 2005th Ave., Seattle, WA 98101.

TEFL Shock

Another special shock case is that of the English teacher abroad. Educated, professional, culturally sensitive as we may like to view ourselves, we will experience the same emotional wrenching of the world from under our feet that everyone else does. And this to some degree each time we go abroad and each time we come back. One of the most serious blows to the ego is the case of the "illiterate professor," living in a country with a non-Roman alphabet. Major philosophical differences in education systems can also be a source of disharmony. The teacher as social role is also a double-edged sword. On one hand, teachers in other countries often have higher social status than in the United States (this poses problems in terms of reverse culture shock). On the other hand, it may be difficult to uphold the role of distinguished personage when one feels reduced, at least emotionally and linguistically, to the role of a child.

The danger is that the teacher will displace the culture shock onto the host nationals in the classroom in the form of cultural diatribes, mild sadism, apathy, or an unconscious attempt to mold them into good little Americans.

One way to ameliorate the effect of culture shock is to at least prepare oneself for it intellectually, arming oneself as much as possible against the emotional impact. The self-assessment exercises in Pierre Casse's (Belgian cross-cultural trainer) Training for the Cross-Cultural Mind (1979) are very helpful for this.

Teaching Culture Shock

Casse's book is also an excellent foundation in preparing to teach the concept of culture shock. Because it is an emotional phenomenon, the key to dealing with it is empathy. If a teacher has lived abroad himself he can draw on his own experiences. If the teacher as not lived abroad, he has certainly experienced grief at some point in his life and can relate to students in terms of that.

The two most important things in relieving culture shock are to give the emotion a name and to emphasize that it is normal. To this end, I use a short reading, written with the simplest vocabulary and controlled structures, explaining culture shock, describing the symptoms and suggesting coping strategies.

Following the reading are multiple choice and true/false comprehension questions to make the reading seem more like a normal class exercise and less of an emotional assault. Then there are discussion questions which gently encourage students to discuss their experiences. The last of these is a breakdown of culture into specific areas--family, roles of men and women, clothing, housing, education, time, cooking, etc.--so that American culture may be compared point by point with the cultures of the students.

Within the weeks or months that follow, the students discuss Kubler-Ross's grief paradign, the Holmes and Holmes stress scale (1970) and a simplified version of Casse's individuation process. I am currently in the process of developing other activities to encourage cross-cultural interaction and perception.

Cautions

The first caution is for us to be aware of our limitations. Most ESL teachers are not professionally-trained cross-cultural psychologists. (Not many people are, either, which is why we are dealing with this subject in the first place.) At the same time, we should not let limitations become an excuse for refusing to deal with the problem. For what we are trying to do, our familiarity with different cultural systems and perceptual systems (i.e., languages), whatever insights we may have had into the workings of the human mind, and above all our own empathy provide us with a foundation. Furthermore, a good deal of the information we lack is readily available to us if we do some background research and reading.

Ultimately, the healing of the wound is in the hands of the patient. We are simply helping him define the affliction and offering possible remedies and support.

Different cultures deal with emotions in different ways. Most are not characterized by the self-help popular psychology and encounter group impulse found in America today. Some are even more reluctant to expose emotional vulnerability than Americans are. Others may use different outlets than we do.

Therefore I usually wait to talk about culture shock until (1) the students have been in the country long enough to have it, and (2) they have been in my class long enough for them to begin to trust me. On one occasion--in order to reach one very disturbed person--I had to rush the procedure; this helped him but alienated a few other people in the class.

I always introduce the concept to a whole group of people, never singling out an individual, and I stress the normality of culture shock. Nguyen (1983) concurs with this approach, especially for classes of largely Asian students.

For groups of non-literate students, I would present the material orally through a translator if I felt the students were emotionally comfortable with the translator--that is, no difficulties due to differences in status, clan rivalries, or other ethnic conflicts. Otherwise, the information might be better relayed through a specific ethnic community network.

I always present material directly and obviously. I never assume that students will extrapolate or induce information (and thus am rarely disappointed).

I have used this approach for three years with ten different groups of students at different levels of language ability. Each time I have heard the sigh of relief go around the room as people realize they aren't going crazy, and felt the warmth grow among the class members as they discover they are all in the same situation and begin to describe their experiences. Several other teachers at Griffin College, the University of Washington, and other language institutes in the Seattle area have field-tested the basic culture shock handout and reported consistently good results.

What If They Cry

The only real resistance I have run into has come from some ESL teachers who say they would feel "uncomfortable" dealing with emotional

issues in the classroom. This is not surprising, considering the fact that teachers in general have to be well-practiced in classroom non-emotion, due to the nature of our work. This excessive objectivity is reinforced by teaching materials written in an emotional vacuum. Although there is a slowly-growing group of notable exceptions, most ESL textbooks depict a sunny fantasy existence or deal with humanitarian problems on a distant global level. ESL textbook characters are not robbed, divorced, raped, cheated or discriminated against. They never get drunk, flee Communists, get beaten by their parents or live in slums. And certainly, no one ever dies. It is possible, I think, to become hypnotised by this Pollyanna world and forget that the lives and needs of the students could actually be more unpleasant. Personally, I feel that if I can alleviate the emotional pain and confusion of twenty or thirty people simply by explaining one concept and possible opening up a channel for relief, my own possible squeamishness is of secondary importance.

What <u>if</u> they cry? I have found that a sort of gestalt consciousness seems to manifest itself. Either everybody cries, or everybody sniffs a little, or nobody cries. And the students seem pretty comfortable with whatever happens.

Introducing the concept of culture shock is a relatively simple thing to do, but it may not be an <u>easy</u> thing to do. I can certainly understand the reluctance of teachers to touch off an unpredictable emotional reaction. A teacher may feel unprepared for the task in terms of his own current emotional state or his lack of personal experience with the phenomenon. On the other hand, it would be committing a grave error of omission to use apprehension as an excuse to ignore the problem altogether.

Ultimately it is in our own best interests as language teachers to address the issue directly. Certain students may benefit merely from the challenge of language learning and divert their attention from their self-absorption, but one cannot count on that type of motivation, and it is a rather cosmetic solution, anyway. Generally, trying to teach English to a student preoccupied within his own cloud of compelling and confusing emotions is extremely frustrating if not actually futile.

If a teacher feels himself to be completely unable to present culture shock as a topic in the classroom, he should actively seek out some other avenue--school counselor, ethnic community associations, foreign language newspapers--for disseminating the information.

By process of elimination, we are it. The responsibility falls upon us to let students know about culture shock.

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture is the knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws and customs of a society. Culture includes the things that we can see--the way people dress, the food that they eat, the customs and festivals that they have. But culture also includes things that we can't see--the values that people have, the way that they react to the world, and the way that they think about life.

When someone goes to live in another culture, he usually has some problems in adjusting to the new culture. Psychologists call this "culture shock".

Culture shock usually starts 3 to 6 months after a person arrives in the new culture. It often lasts several months.

Examples of culture shock are:

1. Complaining a lot about the new culture.

2. Wanting to be together with only people who speak your language.

3. Not wanting to eat the food, speak the language or be with people from the new culture.

4. Feeling very depressed or irritable.

5. Feeling that you are not a good person or that something is wrong with you.

6. Feeling paranoid--that is, feeling that other people are all bad, don't like you, or want to hurt you.

Culture shock is a little different for each person. It begins at different times and can last a few months or a longer time. But EVERYBODY who goes to live in another culture has culture shock at some time. Sometimes it is very bad, but sometimes people don't even know when they have culture shock.

Here are some things that can help if you or your family and friends are going through culture shock:

1. Try to understand the reasons for culture shock. Know that it is normal to feel culture shock. Watch for the symptoms.

2. Most people are uncomfortable when they have to change. Changing cultures is a BIG change. Understand that you are growing as a person because of this experience.

3. Be kind to yourself. Let yourself take a little "vacation" from the new culture. Don't force yourself to do things if you don't want to.

4. Take a "vacation" from the new language. Read books, see movies, talk to people in <u>your own</u> language.

5. Find people from your culture or language group who have already lived in the new country for some time and who have already adjusted. Talk to them about the new culture.

6. If you are really depressed and unhappy, GET HELP. Go to a social worker, counselor, church or doctor.

When a person leaves the new culture and goes back to his own culture, he usually feels culture shock again. This is called "reverse culture shock". Instead of feeling happy to be home, the person often feels that he doesn't fit in his own culture.

Culture shock is something that happens to ANYBODY who goes to live in another culture. Even if someone really likes the new culture, he will probably have a little culture shock. People who can decide to go back to their own country anytime have culture shock, too. People who can't choose to go back--like businessmen or diplomats who are sent to a new country by their companies or governments--often have worse culture shock. And refugees, who cannot return to their own countries, may have very bad culture shock.

But everybody goes into culture shock, and everybody comes out of it in their own time.

Part A. True/False. Circle the right answer.

TRUE FALSE 1. Culture is only what we can see about a society.

TRUE FALSE 2. Sometimes it helps to talk to people who have already had culture shock.

TRUE FALSE 3. Feeling depressed can be a symptom of culture shock.

TRUE FALSE 4. Everybody gets culture shock at the same time.

TRUE FALSE 5. Reverse culture shock happens when you return to your own country.

Part B. Circle the correct answer.

1. Culture shock is_____.

   a. a disease
   b. a feeling
   c. a custom
   d. a society

2. If you have culture shock, you should_____.

   a. go to bed
   b. force yourself to do things that you don't want to do
   c. try to understand what is happening to you
   d. keep away from people

3. Which person would probably have the least culture shock?

   a. a businessman
   b. a refugee
   c. a diplomat
   d. someone who really likes the new culture

4. Most people_____.

   a. like to change
   b. don't like to change
   c. never change
   d. change very easily

Part C. Thinking Questions

1. What are some problems that people have in adjusting to a new culture (For example: new language, missing their family, different weather)

2. Did you go through culture shock already? Are you going through culture shock now? Which symptoms do you think you had or have? How long do you think you were in culture shock? What did you do about culture shock?

3. What things about America are the hardest to get used to? Give some examples.

4. People keep on learning, changing and growing from new experiences all their lives. Are you exactly the same person you were ten years ago? How have you changed? What have you learned from your experiences? How will your experience in a new culture help you to learn and grow?

5. Look at the list of things below. Talk about the American ideas about these things. Talk about the ideas in your country about these things.

family
individual
roles of men and women
clothing
showing affection and emotion
cooking and eating
greetings and politeness
housing
sleeping
dating and courting
general ideas about life
religion
eduation
time

DIRECTING FIRST LANGUAGE READING RESEARCH TOWARD SECOND LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

Part 1: Laying Down the Pathways

Kerry Segal
University of Texas at Austin

A prefatory note: This overview is planned as a framework for understanding the current state of affairs in reading research and applying these generalized findings to the ESL environment. A follow-up will annotate specific research findings and relate them to ESL reading comprehension.

The British journal Reading in a Foreign Language (RFL) began publication with an international editorship in 1983. Its major focus is on English as a foreign languge as taught to adults in post-secondary environments, and it presently makes a unique contribution to the field of ESL reading.

That uniqueness I find most disconcerting. Not until 1983 did we have a journal of national/international stature focusing on adult second language reading. There is no American counterpart devoted to the reading of English as a second/foreign language. Moreover, a search of journals, compilations of reading research, microfiche collections and even guides to research in reading reveals the inadequacy and fragmented nature of reading research in ESL/EFL.

Contrast this sad state of affairs with first language reading research in English. The Annual Summary of Investigations Related to Reading (International Reading Association) has averaged 1000 annotations over each of the past four years. A brief sample of American journals specializing in reading includes Journal of Reading, Reading Research Quarterly, Reading Horizons, Reading Improvement Journal, Journal of Reading Behavior, and Reading Psychology. The Annual Summary monitors over 350 sources for its annotations. Conference yearbooks such as those of the National Reading Conference and Western College Reading (Learning) Association summarize presentations on the most recent reading research. There are research institutes, most prominently the Center for the Study of Reading at Urbana-Champaign, issuing dozens of reading research reports annually. The International Reading Association (IRA) publishes monographs summarizing and interpreting research in various reading related concerns; for example, Reading Comprehension Assessment: A Cognitive Basis (Peter Johnston, 1983) includes 150 items in its bibliography. The best known educational data base, ERIC, in-

cludes several descriptors related to reading (but not reading in a second language). The William S. Gray Microfiche Collection is devoted to research on reading. All in all, it is hard to dispute the claim that reading is the most widely researched field in education today.

The amount and accessibility of L1 reading research is apparent, but what contribution can it offer to ESL reading? We should not dismiss such L1 research because it may not have involved a second language population, nor been inspired by second language concerns. Underlying all reading are commonalities of motivation (why I'm reading), linguistic and graphic processing (matching sound to print), comprehending, and utilization (what I'll do with this material). Furthermore, the English language is common to both areas under consideration. Given these common features it would seem not only impractical but wasteful to ignore the wealth of L1 reading research.

How then should L1 reading research be applied in the ESL situation? In broad perspective, the years of careful insight and cleverly planned L1 reading investigations can serve as a way of thinking about the reading and learning processes of our students. Many methods and materials applied to diagnosis, teaching, learning, and testing in L1 reading are already utilized in ESL. Perhaps most important is the fact that both the native and non-native English speakers in America are consumers, workers and students. Reading electric bills, medicine labels, technical manuals, and textbooks are needs of both groups. The common reading purposes of both groups may in many cases outweigh linguistic differences.

Once underlying features and structures that apply to reading generically are found, then specific findings should be tested with the learner group of specific interest. It is the purpose of this article to bridge the L1-L2 research gap in the domain of reading comprehension by presenting generalized finding and noting how they might apply in the ESL environment.

The Domain of Reading Comprehension:

Reading research in the past decade has radically restructured the way we analyze the reading process. One way this analysis can be presented is by dividing the process of reading into (1) the text, (2) the reader, (3) the task, and (4) their interaction for diagnostic and teaching purposes.

The unit we call the text has not until recently been systematically analyzed. Previous linguistic approaches looked at meaning of words and phrases while rhetoricians categorized readings into genres and general logical organizations, e.g., temporal and cause-effect. A structural analysis based on the psycho-linguistic reality of the readers interacting with whole texts was not done.

Today we have a very different way of looking at text that is in keeping with the aim of the average reading: to gain something from the content. This experimentally-based structure is founded on micro-units (idea units) and their relationships.

These micro units, generally referred to as propositions, consist of a concept and its attributes, called arguments. An example: "the car is red" is a proposition with the concept "car" and its attribute "red." There are differences among reading researchers as to what constitutes a proposition or concept, yet the fact remains that in testing reading proficiency we should be concerned with ideas/concepts more than grammatical relationships. What is especially important is that these propositions experimentally have shown some psycholinguis-

tic reality; for example, it has been shown that readings with more attributes (examples) per idea unit are harder to recall. Such a result is contrary to the common sense adage that the more information you give about a topic, the easier it is recalled. Another finding is that the number of arguments per proposition does not usually exceed the number of isolated elements a fluent reader can recall--another example of the psychological reality of the proposition.

The micro-units are the building blocks of text; two or more of them joined together are called macro-units. There is no one way to organize micro-units into the macro-units, but the underlying approach involves relating ideas semantically and logically, rather than through formalized grammatical constructs.

To a comprehension-oriented reading teacher, a system based on idea relationships is innately appealing; what is more significant are research findings involving real people reading real texts. What has been found is that information is generally recalled better when it is placed at a higher superordinate level. Another finding is that relationships are better recalled when logical connectors are made explicit (e.g. through the use of relative pronouns and adverbials).

No text development marks such a radical departure from tradition than the structuring described above. There are, among other text-related issues, two that are important in the reading research literature--main idea and inference.

The terms main idea and inference suggest that these are unitary concepts; however, recent conceptual exploration and reader-based research findings have definitely discredited this idea. What a main idea might be is demonstrated by responses to the following passage:

> When a bird lands he has to be careful that he doesn't tumble forward. Like an airplane the bird lands into the wind. The wind acts as a brake. Some birds fan the tail and turn it downward. The legs absorb much of the shock.

The seven main idea categories devised by the authors (according to the responses of the children reading the passage) include:

1. topic sentence: (the first sentence);
2. gist: how a bird lands in such a way that he does not get hurt;
3. IRP (Instantiated Rhetorical Predicate): this passage is about how careful birds have to be when they land and how they slow down to land;
4. topic: how birds land;
5. topic issues: birds;
6. interpretation: when the bird lands, it lands carefully and slowly, and the bird opens its wings until it lands;
7. these: nature prepares animals to cope with their environment (204)[1]

Tested on five passages, sixth-grades responded with every category except theme. More mature readers tended to select a topic sentence or give a gist when asked for the main idea.

Inference is more conceptually complex than the main idea. Most reading might be considered inferential, as reading is an indirect statement of reality. One major division of inference is into those inferences which seek to relate parts of text (e.g., when an explicit connector is not written), as opposed to inferences relating text to outside knowledge. It has also been suggested that inferences be classified according to

type of relation:

1. logical relationships such as motivational, enabling, psychological and physical;
2. informational relationships;
3. evaluation.

The importance of investigation into the main idea and inference is that it has clearly demonstrated the inadequacy of traditional definitions. Furthermore, it has provided a framework for determining reader competency in these skills areas. Finally it provides a construct that will relate text-based and context (experiential)-based relationships.

In sum, recent developments in L1 reading research give us an idea-oriented framework for analyzing reader interaction with text. They have also refined our thinking about basic comprehension skills, in particular inferencing and main idea concepts.

Next Issue: The Reader, the Task, and the Interaction

[1]David Moore, James Cunningham and Nancy Rudisell. Readers' Conception of the Main Idea. In the Thirty-second Yearbook of the National Reading Conference. Rochester, N.Y. 1983.

PONSOT AND DEEN WIN AWARD

We are pleased to share with our readers the news that the Modern Language Association of America has awarded the 1982 Mina P. Shaughnessy Medal to Marie Ponsot and Rosemary Deen for their book Beat Not the Poor Desk: Writing: What to Teach, How to Teach It, and Why, published by Boynton/Cook. TECFORS published a review of this book in the May 1983 issue and a letter of response from Rosemary Deen in the September 1983 issue.

The Mina P. Shaughnessy Medal is awarded for an outstanding research publication in the field of teaching English language and literature. The award consists of $500, a medal, and a year's membership in MLS. An anonymous donor has generously contributed an additional $250. The Committee on Teaching and Related Professional Activities of the Modern Language Association, under whose auspices the Mina P. Shaughnessy Medal is awarded, was inaugurated in 1973 and charged by the Executive Council of the MLA to concern itself with the philosophy and methodology of teaching language and literature and with the relation between research and teaching in these areas. The Committee also sponsors the Kenneth W. Mildenberger Medal for an outstanding research publication in the field of teaching foreign languages and literatures.

The citation for the award reads as follows:

For their book on the teaching of writing, Marie Ponsot and Rosemary Deen take a title from an ancient book: Ben Johnson's Timber, or Discoveries upon Men and Matters. If you "succeed not, cast not away the quills yet, nor scratch the wainscot, beat not the poor desk, but bring all to the forge and file again; turn it new." In Beat Not the Poor Desk, the authors view writing as a self-disciplining, self-clarifying process. They adapt the notion of Gestalt-perception to the classroom in a wealth of practical ways that will foster Discoveries of Selves and Matters by writing.

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A WORD OF APPRECIATION

We wish to thank the members of the Department of English at the University of Tennessee for their encouragement and support of the November 1983 issue. Also, we would like to thank those who have helped with the typing, production, and printing of the January issue:

Mary Strahan, Houston Community College
Tom Erdos, University of Houston.

TECFORS is published five times a year--in January, March, May, September and November.

Send subscription requests ($4.00 per year; $7.00 for two years; $6.50 per year abroad or $12.00 for two years abroad) to Nancy V. Lee at her address below. Manuscriots and correspondence may be sent to any of the editors. Manuscripts should generally be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed.

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

Volume VII March 1984 Number 2

PROCESS OR PRODUCT? AN EXERCISE IN BOTH

Linda Yoder
West Virginia University

Each decision that we make in planning a composition course seems small in itself. Yet like a drop of rain falling upon the great divide, each seems inevitably to go in one direction or another. Shall it be in favor of process, or in favor of product? In favor of form, or in favor of content? Reading Krashen, we find another dichotomy to consider--in favor of language acquisition or in favor of language learning?

Teaching writing, whether to American college students or speakers of other languages, I find some of my continual goals to be the same: imparting a sense of audience, encouraging care in detail, teaching the process of inquiry and problem solving, giving a sense of realism to the task, helping them know the delight of success. This summer, teaching composition to college-bound foreign students, I found a way to accomplish all of these.

I pondered first the question of audience. With what audience could they realistically be expected to communicate in writing, and to communicate with a sense of authority? When I do not have a clearly-defined audience, I've discovered, I write best imagining that I'm writing to someone like me. Someone like them, I thought, and there was the answer. I proposed that the class create a book for next summer's ESL students.

We began by employing a simple but effective heuristic--many, many questions. The questions they generated were those that they had desperately needed to have answered when they arrived in Morgantown. Since they had been in the U. S. only about a week when we began the project, the questions were very, very fresh in their minds. Over the next several days we kept adding to our question list.

Then we were ready for the next step--organizing these disparate questions. Students grouped the questions under main headings, not an easy task. Finally they arrived at about ten main headings, and the next step had to be taken--research.

For each heading, I asked the students to list as many sources of information as possible--names of people to interview, maps and bus schedules to consult, offices on campus to visit, and so forth. Only when we as a group had arrived at our questions, our plan of organization, and our research sources did students commit themselves to writing the chapters individually.

After the composing, the next stage, editing, gave opportunities for work at many levels. At the macro level, it meant that we sometimes had to go back to discuss audience and purpose. Would our arrangement be easy to follow? Should we have included instruction on how to open a bank account or to write a check? At the micro level, we worked intensively with words, phrases, and sentences that they found problematic, striving for clarity and appropriateness. The goal was not merely to please a teacher but to help a fellow traveller.

All the students tried their hands at the introduction and the table of contents page. The computer whiz of the class designed a stunning cover using computer graphics, and the department took care of duplicating. Suddenly, we had published! We ended the 6-week course, not with a mere summertime sigh of relief, but on a high note of accomplishment.

The resulting document, full of flavor and originality, is like nothing produced by a committee, or for that matter, an institution. One student chronicled the hazards of Morgantown's various drinking establishments; another, constructing detailed plans for getting out of town, wrote, "I think Pittsburgh is our only link with the world."

The teaching of writing in ESL has been critized for failing to prepare students to meet the demands of a product-oriented world. But I found that I did not have to choose between teaching writing as the process of discovering meaning (as Zamel advocates) and teaching writing as product (as Blanton advises). And my students experienced the pleasure of writing with care--care for the written word, but more than that, care for their readers.

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A REVIEW

Teaching Expository Writing, by Dr. William F. Irmscher (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979).

Shirley L. Allister
San Diego State University

> . . . I don't think a handbook or rhetoric addressed to students substitutes for a book on teaching addressed specifically to teachers, particularly if the book aims to help teachers find a compatible way of teaching, not to promote what the author thinks is the one best way for everybody. As far as I am concerned, there is no one best way, but there are good ways . . . . (p. 4)

Dr. Irmscher's book delivers what it seems here to promise, identification and support of good ways. While it is not addressed specifically to ESL teachers, what he writes about is extremely helpful; his Representative Projects are often directly applicable to this special population of writing students. Irmscher's philosophy is consonant with research of past decades and takes note of major changes of emphasis from which he forms the basic premise of the book: writing is a complex form of acting with language that involves our total selves—"our thoughts and feelings and attitudes and tastes and verbal resources." (p. 28) Yet given the highly individual nature of the person and the writing task, the author sees the common behavior in writing as a way to consider how to teach, how to stimulate the process in each individual. We would do best, he believes, first to encourage generation of ideas, emotions and the intuitive sense of structure, and then to consider the problems of mechanics and style. He emphasizes the need to recognize the part that intuition plays in composing and to learn to develop this resource in our students. Undertaking to define intuitive resource, Dr. Irmscher writes a brilliant chapter on our senses of the "normative," of simplicity, of rhythm, and of order. A short chapter is entitled "Who Is a Good Composition Teacher?" The touchstone is student-teacher relationship, with the attitudes of the teacher being "a stronger influence than any of the materials." Acknowledging variation, the "ways" of the quotation above, he examines carefully the questions of what helps and what harms the student. The "good" teacher is far from idealized, but is an identifiable model against which to test one's self.

The second part of Dr. Irmscher's book is devoted to practical matters which he calls the project discovery method. The two parts are perfectly integrated: all the philosophy is put to work in chapters entitled "Planning a Course," "Topics," "Pre-Writing," "Teaching Structure," "Teaching Words," "Teaching Mechanics," "Teaching Style," and "Evaluation." The projects at each chapter's end are specific and detailed, readily adaptible for special populations or writers. These chapters examine how things are done, weave in an excellent review of recent research and with a delicate, but sure touch, give the author's view of how things may be done for successful teaching. The writer as

sculptor finding innate form best represents Irmscher's concept of discovery. He advocates the use of hueristics and open-ended questions in pursuit of the process of writing. And, while he sees finding the "perfect" word as the work of revision and refining, he knows the practical needs of student and teacher. One example, among many that punctuate this book, is his chart for approaching words systematically:

Action	Agent Instrument	Act-Result	Description	Manner
(finite verb)	(noun)	(gerund or noun)	(adjective)	(adverb)
prepare	preparer	preparing preparation	prepared preparatory	preparedly preparatorily
quiz	quizzer	quiz quizzing	quizzical	quizzically

He suggests that the bracketed parts of speech may be omitted and explains the technique as giving students one form of each word and asking them to generate the others if possible. At the top of the form he lists all the common verb, noun, adjective and adverb/suffixes. In this activity, Irmscher finds that less familiar forms of words may be discovered, seldom-used forms (such as preparer and preparedly) and spelling changes (such as maintain and maintenance) can invigorate discussion. He believes that if students in basic courses "work on five words per day using their dictionaries and then discuss their findings . . . gradually they will begin to think of new words they can use by extending the ones they already know." (p. 110)

Dr. Irmscher has been directing the Freshman English program and teaching a course called The Composition Process at the University of Washington for many years. He is the author of the Holt, Rinehart and Winston handbook, The Holt Guide to English.

My reading of Teaching Expository Writing was in the nature of a revelation. Irmscher's vision of the psychological ground in teaching the writer, his discussion of the totality of process in writing, and then the practical nature of the chapters on teaching practice were refreshing, invigorating. This is a rather small volume, yet its impact is large. My copy is fast becoming "USED."

In response to our questions about her article "Academic Writing vs. Composition" in the November 1983 issue, Macey McKee sent us this article in which she and Daniel Horowitz expanded their discussion of the topics mentioned in the first article. They and we would welcome your response.

METHODS FOR TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING

Daniel M. Horowitz
and
Macey B. McKee
Western Illinois University

Among the activities we have found most useful for teaching academic writing are those which involve analytical and critical thinking in English. We have had great success with such activities as the Propaganda Game (McKee 1982), which involves no actual writing but whose utility as a generalized pre-writing activity is demonstrated by the conspicuous effects in such areas as argument skills, careful reading, certain syntactic and semantic problems, and organization.

Memering has written

> The key to all research is the evaluation of evidence. Collecting the data, taking notes, making outlines, using proper documentation, and writing in an academic style are all important components of research, of course, but nothing is as important as the analysis and interpretation of evidence. (1983:32)

As true as this is for native speakers, for whom Memering's book was written, it is even more true for foreign students, most of whom are the products of educational systems where unquestioning acceptance of books and teachers as ultimate authorities is the norm. In our class we combat this problem in many ways, two of which are the oral argumentative presentation and the group documented essay project.

The oral argumentative presentation, which each student is required to give, is preceded by extensive work on argumentation both from a structural-analytical point of view, where a simplified version of Toulmin's scheme is used (1958), and the discourse point of view, where essay length argumentative cases are seen as a series of paragraph length (or longer) responses to a series of crucial questions (issues) inherent in a given thesis statement (Horowitz 1984).

Each presentation is videotaped and followed by a class discussion, the purpose of which is to show the speaker weaknesses in his or her argumentation, in preparation for the writing of an essay with the same thesis statement. The class is provided with a transcript of the talk (major grammar problems corrected) and a worksheet guiding them to an analysis of points they may have missed in the previous day's discussion.

The following is an excerpt from a student's speech, followed by a worksheet dealing with the argumentation in that excerpt:

> So the first problem I would like to discuss here is linked to alcoholism. On college campuses in the U.S., seven out of eight men and three out of four women use alcoholic beverages. Just imagine that almost three-fourths of college students drink. There are many alcohol problems, maybe because of the college administration itself. For example, if the Faculty Club has a bar on campus and if cocktails are served, maybe the students will feel social pressure. So the question now is, what does this have to do with society?
>
> Well, you are all intelligent persons, you can all think what alcoholics can bring to society. For example, it makes his or her family start to worry because in some places families just cannot accept the fact that their child is an alcoholic; it makes them lie. Keep in mind that an alcoholic's morals break down and he or she may feel totally defeated. At this point, the male's severe feelings of insecurity about his masculinity appear and the net result to the family can be violence with real physical danger. They might attack or beat someone. Another thing is accidents caused by drinking and driving.
>
> Another problem is concerned with drugs. It is common among college students, some of whom are away from home for the first time, that some surprising behavior patterns of drug use may appear. Let's take as an example if you have an exam the next day, you study hard and maybe get a headache. Let's say that you take two aspirins, or more. If you can't sleep from exam anxiety or something, why not take sleeping pills? You must remember that sooner or later if you use these kinds of drugs you may turn into a drug abuser. In such a situation where you don't have any money but you desperately need that stuff, the easiest way is to steal from others. It's a possibility, you can't deny that. Maybe you are stealing and robbing and it might hurt the victims and cause other social problems.

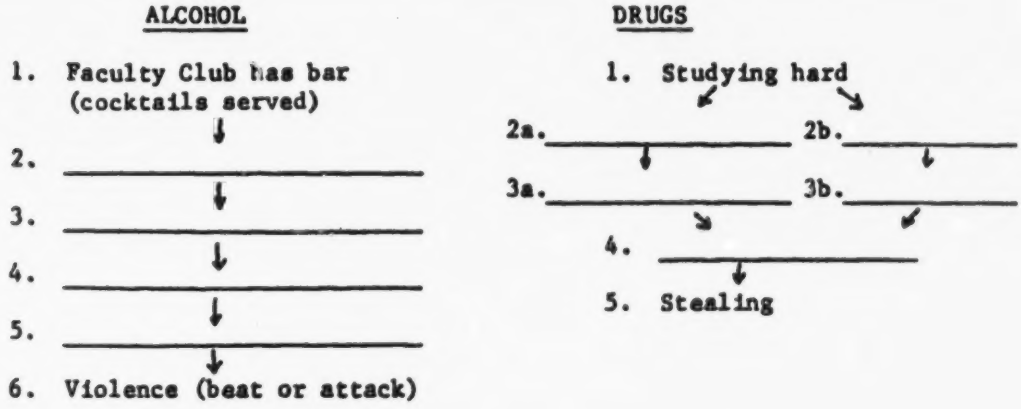
This presentation was used to illustrate a few points about casual arguments:

ARGUMENTATION WORKSHEET

For each claim, this student presents a "casual chain" as evidence that she is correct. Here is an example of a casual chain:

1. I was worried about my final exam.
   ↓ (EACH ARROW = THEREFORE)
2. I forgot to set my alarm.
   ↓
3. I overslept.
   ↓
4. I missed my exam.
   ↓
5. I failed the course.

Analyze the casual chain that this student uses to show the dangers of alcohol and drugs. Fill in the intermediate steps in her arguments:



There is a saying in English: "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link." Likewise, a "casual chain" is only as strong as its weakest casual connection. When we hear or read a casual chain argument, at each step we should ask ourselves these questions:

1. Does each step <u>necessarily</u> lead to the next one, or could it possibly lead somewhere else?

2. Does each step <u>sufficiently</u> explain the next step, or is the situation really more complicated?

For each step in this student's casual chains, answer questions <u>1</u> and <u>2</u>. If we believe that this student's argumentation is weak, does this mean that we approve of alcohol and drugs?

This method requires a great deal of work and thought on the part of the teacher, but the results are infinitely superior to those we have had with published material. This oral work serves as a good preliminary to the group research paper project.

Almost every book written as a guide to writing research papers (or documented essays, as they should more correctly be labeled) is based on the assumption that each student will write on an individual topic. Although there are advantages to having students go off on their own and write individual essays, we question whether this is, in the final analysis, in the students' best interests. When a class of fifteen or more students writes research papers on as many different topics, granting that experienced teachers can spot outright plagiarism a mile away, how can the teachers tell if a student has found the best sources and really understood them? Our opinion is that students must have a feeling for what they are looking for before they are sent out on their own to find it. In other words, if a student has never gone into any topic in depth, how does he or she know what "in depth" means? Most students have the quite understandable tendency to avoid what looks difficult, settling for what they

can easily deal with. The exceptional student digs deep, but average (and below average) students dig only as deep as they absolutely must to get a passing grade.

One answer to this is a common documented essay in which students are called upon to write analytical-critical essays based on challenging and, at times, contradictory authentic texts which the teacher has also read. Getting away with plagiarism becomes impossible. The possibilities for teaching summarizing and paraphrasing are enormous. The student must demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the reading or else face writing the essays again. Class discussion on difficult points in the reading approximates real university discussion sections. Questioning skills are developed. We know that, at least this once, the student is going through the difficult but essential process of evaluating and presenting evidence in support of a thesis at a level of sophistication comparable to that which is expected and required in a university setting.

The subject of this project is "An Analysis and Evaluation of the Evidence for the Existence of Extra-Sensory Perception." This topic was chosen for several reasons. First, it is a real scientific controversy which has been fought in books and journals for the last hundred years. Second, we felt that there was an important lesson to learn from taking a scientific approach to a subject which exists only in the realm of superstition in most cultures.

The readings were selected from specialized encyclopediae, books and journals, and exercises were designed to guide the student to the ideas behind the words (Horowitz 1983). In most cases, sections were excerpted from longer articles or chapters, but in no case was the text tampered with in any other way. The readings are divided into six sections, each of which is dominated by a question or series of questions which serve two purposes: to focus the students' attention on what is to be gleaned from that section and to provide the issues which must be addressed in a short essay. As we finish each section, the students write an essay which is handed back to them with comments on the content and grammar corrections. By the end of the project, the student has written six 2-3 page essays, each one developing one important facet of the subject. By putting the six together, editing the resulting long essay for continuity, adding an introduction, a conclusion, citations and references, the student has more or less painlessly produced a coherent documented essay.

The sentence combining exercises previously mentioned (McKee 1983) are used in a way that reinforces this cognitive approach, for research (McKee 1981, 1984) indicates that both materials and methods make a difference. Some general principles underlying the selection and creation of sentence combining material and decisions regarding its use are:

1. No unnatural "kernels" are used; i.e., all sentences are possible normal English sentences. Thus, many texts written for native speakers cannot be used (e.g., Strong 1973).

2. Single-sentence product exercises may have directions which evoke a particular structure ("Combine each group of sentences into one sentence by making one sentence into an adverbial clause" or "...by using a gerund"), but no actual cues, word cues or linguistic shorthand are used.

3. Insofar as possible, even these single-sentence product exercises have more than one grammatical solution. We are not attempting to force the student to find the answer, and we are trying to foster evaluation of alternatives.

4. In paragraph or longer exercises, there are several ways of combining the ideas or pieces of information. Students are encouraged to compare their results with those of other students, and selected paragraphs are put on the screen for group discussion.

5. Most of the material used results in writing which is in an academic register and on an academic topic. Native speaker texts are again deemed not entirely suitable, for they generally contain exercises which lead to writing in a literary style and topics which are neither academic nor likely to be as familiar and interesting to foreign students as to American college students.

6. Group work precedes individual work, and there is additional group work during the unit. Discussion is viewed as absolutely vital in achieving two major goals: the maximization of learning from peers and the realization by the students that there is no one right way to convey a body of information, that writing a good paragraph or essay involves many choices which depend on choices made for preceding and subsequent text.

We concur in the belief that a great deal of learning can take place within the group, with a minimum of assistance from the teacher (Vygotsky 1978). Discussion allows students to correct each other and to suggest alternative solutions. The teacher can become a discussant, as advisable, or simply correct an error before it is written, with or without comment. The teacher can prompt or suggest alternative solutions, serve as reference source in case of doubt, and guide the evaluation of the "fit" of each alternative in the context of what has already been written and what information remains to be incorporated. At times, the group effort results in a better paragraph than the original from which it was decombined. This has happened several times with an exercise made from a reading selection in Reading English for Academic Study (Long et al. 1980), which is used early in the course; students react very positively to the discovery that they are able to write a paragraph which is a little more sophisticated than the one in the text.

A specific grammar topic which has recently become a matter of increased concern is that of elaborated nominals (Mellon 1983) of the

type in which there is lengthy modification before the noun as opposed to the well-organized problem of post-nominal modification (relative clauses and their reductions and transformations). Materials which treat only "dog house" and "twenty-cent stamp" are inadequate when the student needs to produce or unravel such noun phrases as "electronic data-processing equipment sales research results." Even in written text, such phrases will be difficult to translate into "the results of research on the sales of equipment which processes data electronically." It is difficult to imagine the strain on the short-term memory processing capabilities of the student who has not practiced combining and decombining such phrases before he attends university lectures.

The recent increase in the proportion of Oriental students in our program has brought about a noticeable problem with listening comprehension. To meet this need while continuing to stress reading and writing academic prose, we have used published materials (Mason 1983, Rossi and Gasser 1983) as a start, creating additional material to accompany their activities and creating other materials to use with less satisfactory publications and with authentic text. We find that information transfer tasks, in the form of a cause-effect diagram, a classification tree, or some similar conceptual scheme, not only help the students comprehend the material but also result in concrete guidance for the organization of the data in the subsequent essay task. We use real speakers and authentic text as much as possible, and we find that content does indeed significantly determine both organization and choice of linguistic items,perhaps a writing manifestation of the Bauhaus School of Architecture slogan: Form Follows Function.

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PART II: THE READER, THE TASK, AND THE INTERACTION

Kerry Segel
University of Texas

The second component of the reading act is the reader, traditionally excluded from linguistic and rhetorical research. One of the major accomplishments of recent research has been to demonstrate that the most significant factor in determining text difficulty has been a reader's ability to apply background knowledge and structure, termed schema. Fluent readers of English given passages concerning cultures other than their own have misinterpreted and incorrectly recalled these passages. Still another factor involving readers is the size of their vocabulary; this, studies show, is a good predictor of reading ability because it most likely represents the degree of general background knowledge.

Other studies have shown that readers will remember different information according to their purpose, e.g., reading a passage on a house from the perspective of a burglar or that of a prospective buyer. Memory in general is now considered integral to the reading process.

Beyond (or above) the reader's background is his metacognitive ability, essentially the ability to know why comprehension has taken place and how to repair miscomprehension. This ability may be the basis of what makes an independent reader. Research is now being conducted to find methodologies which will develop readers' metacognitive ability and make text comprehension easier for them.

The text is met by a reader who has a task to fulfill. Johnston has suggested eight task variables which may affect reading comprehension.

1. production requirements
2. memory and retrieval requirements (is the text available or not)
3. reasoning requirements
4. motivation
5. purpose
6. social setting and interaction-contrived vs. natural
7. expectation and perceived demand
8. test-wiseness

Finally, when the reader meets a text for a certain task, how is difficulty determined? Not surprisingly, traditional readability and testing measures have been found severely deficient. Readability measures are traditionally based on words and not word relationships. They cannot differentiate complexity of idea relationships, nor can they take into account reader background knowledge, a point clearly significant for ESL readers.

Standardized tests suffer from several defects. Short passages, especially the two- or three-sentence variety, may not have a complet -ed macro-structure and thus be more difficult and less representative of real reading than intended by the test writer. Vital elements of reading comprehension such as background knowledge and inferencing are not well tested because of the lack of retest reliability of such questions. These tests do not differentiate different types of main ideas and inferences. They do not evaluate the ability to monitor and correct miscomprehension. In addition, the testing environment is different from the normal reading environment of the student. The randomized blank cloze test — often used by those dissatisfied with traditional standardized testing — can also suffer from shortcomings. The blank-filling task hardly simulates a normal reading procedure. Additionally, research during the past several years has shown the inability of the cloze test to judge how well students connect ideas across sentence boundaries.

From first to second English

ESL reading comprehension texts should serve the same purpose as first language texts -- promoting the understanding, enjoyment and application of ideas. It is logical then that the idea-based macro- and micro-structure system be utilized in the analysis and construction of passages used in the ESL learning environment. Since passage construction is time-consuming, such effort would be best used in the construction of a placement test. This test should also utilize the main idea and inference constructs referred to previously.

There is much to be done for the ESL reader. First, we can help the reader build up background knowledge to compensate for comprehension limitations resulting from linguistic and cultural background differences. Word knowledge should be developed in relation to concepts within a text. Through macro-structural analysis, we can also show the reader the relationships among and the relative importance of different levels of information. The main idea and inference constructs are the basis for introducing text-based concepts and showing how they relate to background knowledge.

The research in memory should convince us of the importance of background information and macro-structure in determining passage difficulty. It would seem a "memory for English" program could be developed by increasing micro- and macro-structural complexity in a single genre.

The area I think most neglected in comprehension falls under the area of metacognition, i.e., knowing how to know. We need to guide our students in understanding different reasons for difficulty, in particular by separating language (vocabulary and grammatical) from conceptual difficulties and relationships. In this way students can develop multiple comprehension strategies that are not so dependent on "knowing the word."

The task demands outlined by Johnston should be a stern warning to us to control carefully the tasks we expect of the student, determining how they cause difficulty and how they match with outside needs. Tasks deemed necessary should be practiced in concentration until mastered.

On assessment of reading comprehension proficiency: the invalid principles on which standardized group reading tests are based, apart from their cultural biases, render these tests inappropriate for all but perhaps the most gross assessment levels. For diagnosis it would be best to develop individual reading inventories (IRI's) which would use micro- and macro-relationships as the basic guide to complexity. I suggest using the following guidelines:

1. Begin with passages having the most explicit, "complete" macro-structure and the fewest challenges to short-term memory.

2. Gradually introduce language-specific difficulties (e.g., vocabulary, English grammatical structures) in order not to confound English language with conceptual difficulties.

3. Include inference and main idea questions that test the student's ability to use textual, contextual and background knowledge appropriately.

Vocabulary tests should be set up to determine two kinds of vocabulary knowledge: what I call (1) "dictionary-translation" knowledge—the ability to match words to definition—and (2) "conceptual association" knowledge—the ability to apply background knowledge to usage choices.

In conclusion, reading research can and should vitally affect the

way reading comprehension is taught. Basic contributions include:

1. systems of text analysis based on concept relationships
2. refined understanding of comprehension skills
3. much psycho-linguistically valid experimentation in matching the reader to text
4. a demonstration of the inadequacy of traditional readability measures and guidelines for alternatives
5. many experimental designs and much data to compare
6. a strong enough data base and research community to provide continuity in research.

Notes:

1. Peter Johnston, Reading Comprehension Assessment: A Cognitive Basis. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association. 1983. p.34.

A Word of Appreciation

We wish to thank the members of the Department of English at the University of Houston for their encouragement and support of TECFORS' first three issues of 1984. Also, we would like to thank those who have helped with the typing, production, and printing of this March issue:

Theresa Schlosser, University of Houston
Tom Erdos, University of Houston

TECFORS is published five times a year--in January, March, May, September and November.

Send subscription requests ($4.00 per year; $7.00 for two years; $6.50 per year abroad or $12.00 for two years abroad) to Nancy V. Lee at her address below. Manuscripts and correspondence may be sent to any of the editors. Manuscripts should generally be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed.

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For: 1984 _____

Or: 1984 and 1985

TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing
and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

Volume VII May 1984 Number 3

SOME PRAGMATIC DIMENSIONS OF ESL WRITING TUTORIALS[1]

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INTRODUCTION

The difficulties encountered by the non-native in learning to write in an appropriate style may be of several sources. This paper concerns one aspect of the "problem" that has received relatively little attention: the sociocultural dimension in writing, the pragmatics of the writing process itself. For the language learner, the oral, interpersonal skills required in discussing a piece of one's writing are especially valuable, e.g., eliciting and responding to criticism, directing another's attention to specific features of a draft, and describing the purpose or effect a text is supposed to achieve. By developing skill at successfully eliciting outside assistance, non-native writers can, to some extent, compensate for their writing deficiencies, learn to self-correct and thus gradually improve their writing -- outside of official channels. In what follows, the case is made that strategies employed in getting this kind of assistance or feedback should be the subject of study and instruction; some tentative suggestions are given as to how such strategies might be taught.

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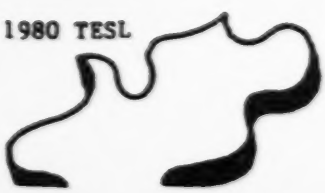
[1] An earlier version of this paper was delivered at the 1980 TESL Association of Ontario Conference.



RATIONALE

The ideas in this paper began to evolve during a series of ESL programs for foreign psychiatrists (see Imber and Acton 1978; Acton 1984). The psychiatrists we were working with had as one of their primary duties the task of writing admissions and progress reports. In many cases, problems with grammar and vocabulary (or something else) made the reports virtually unintelligible to other staff members. We began by helping the psychiatrists with their writing, especially the language required in the reports. In general, the "patients" (that is, the psychiatrists) responded well to the program. In two or three cases, however, the non-native doctor's language problems were so severe and the duration of the program so short that more unorthodox "treatment" was in order.

What we attempted to do, in essence, was to teach the psychiatrists how to talk about their writing with the clerks who were recipients (and frequent "editors") of most of the reports. We worked with interpersonal skills, such as how to cultivate a good working relationship with the clerks, how to talk about the language of the reports, and how to elicit criticism and suggestions from a subordinate, and various important non-literal uses of the language. The psychiatrists' ability to function in that environment seemed to be enhanced considerably, although their actual ability to write in the appropriate style was slow to develop. The basic principles that emerged were these (and they seem to apply to natives as well as non-natives): first, if there is some way professionals or students can get appropriate assistance with their writing, they should; and second, the extent to which they get such help on a piece of writing is, to a significant degree, a function of their linguistic-pragmatic abilities in eliciting such assistance.

Another motivation for this paper and some related research has been my work in ESL classrooms teaching composition. I had often suggested to students that they try to get their roommate or American friend to read over their compositions for them. Rarely did students appear to profit from such "free" help. If a foreign student was in fact fortunate enough to locate a willing helper, chances are the helper would either undercorrect or correct the wrong things altogether. At some point I gave up trying to get students free tutoring, even though they were usually sent forth on such "expeditions" in the spirit of practice in "communicative competence" (Savignon 1972).

A more recent spur to the development of this framework was a desire to develop better group-correction techniques in ESL composition classes. In ESL classes where group correction procedures were not working well, it became quite evident that many students did not know what to say when talking about their own or another's composition, especially when students were required to elicit or give negative, critical feedback. That type of interaction is challenging even for native speakers, to be sure. Listening carefully to the language used by foreign students attempting to "help" one another during peer-

correction sessions was an eye-opening experience. In part because of their lack of control of polite and tactful ways of making corrections and giving suggestions, much of what the students said appeared to be, at face value, either blunt, rude, or often a serious misrepresentation of what the speakers/editor intended. Small wonder that students may feel uncomfortable being "helped" in such situations.

The next logical step was to collect data on how students go about introducing their writing problems when in a conference with their instructor. Most tended to give the instructor/reader nothing by way of preparation; they just handed over the composition and cowered in the corner, awaiting the inevitable.

It is interesting to speculate just where and how students learn to correct peers' papers. Given some fairly intimidating, impolite behavior on the part of teachers, it would not be too surprising to see some of those same strategies being used on fellow students. Such teacher behavior certainly has an impact on what goes on in correction groups and influences how students behave when dealing with a tutor outside of class. In fact, the whole question of the language teacher as a model is just beginning to receive the attention it deserves (e.g., Allwright 1983).

AN "EDITOR" MODEL

Krashen (1977, and elsewhere) has proposed what he terms the "monitor" model. The monitor model attempts to explain differences in second language production based on whether or not learners self-correct their speech and in what manner they do so. What I am proposing here is what we might loosely term the "editor" model (see also, Acton 1984). It is, on one level, a model for the learner of how to work with an editor. The "editor" also functions as a "monitor," that is, it may serve to help learners (in a roundabout way) better monitor and edit their own speech and writing.

The process of teaching how to work with an editor or tutor is, of course, at the same time an indirect treatment of factors that the writer should consider before writing. By rehearsing what one is going to say to an editor (concerning, for example, the intended audience, the purpose for the composition, and the intended effect), the student may be able to avoid making mistakes in the first place. The editor function, the critical evaluation of the piece of writing after it is hypothetically finished, is of course difficult for the beginning writer to develop. This type of focus on the editor can be utilized to associate and remember a number of procedures that will be useful for the beginning ESL writer in addition to the prima facie value of actually learning how to get assistance with writing from native speakers.

REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

In assisting a foreigner with his writing, an editor need not be an English major, one who has conscious control of all the rhetorical

processes necessary for accomplishing this task at hand. What is required is a basic ability to write acceptable prose.[2]

Recommending that someone get assistance with his or her writing has other implications that deserve discussion. A frequent problem for the foreigner who elicits the aid of a native in writing is that the style of the final draft may come off sounding too much like that of the editor. In an academic environment, if the student happens to be in a class where content is the main concern, such as a geography class where there is a required term paper, then the contribution of the editor may not be as critical as long as the ideas expressed are in fact those of the student.

When the purpose of the writing assignment is to help the student learn the language or how to write, then the use of an editor becomes more problematic. Rather than discouraging the student from trying to get assistance during the course of an ESL class, it seems preferable to instruct the student as to what sorts of aid from the native speaker are appropriate and beneficial and how to obtain such help.

Discussion of this topic with ESL students also helps to clarify the issue of plagarism. Often students are not aware of what plagarism is in this culture and that it is much easier to spot in the composition of a non-native speaker, primarily because of frequent perceptible shifts in style. Therefore, when requesting help, students also need to be taught how to alert their editor to the problems of plagarism and consistency in style, for example: "Does all of this sound like my writing?" A more precise approach would be for students to explain to editors that, even though their ideas are taken from various sources, their paper must be written in their own words (inadvertent "borrowings" of others' words by non-native writers will usually stick out like "sore thumbs"). Furthermore, students should instruct editors to help them avoid cliches and slang.

INTERACTING WITH AN EDITOR

In deciding how to approach the question of preparing students to work with an editor, considerations of intended audience are crucial. With the foreign psychiatrists mentioned earlier, the editor was to be either a clerk, secretary, or professional colleague. In what follows, we will assume students to be talking about their writing with either peers or ESL instructors.

Describing for someone else the audience and purpose can be most beneficial. For example, the tutor may not know enough to ask, in the right way, whether or not the composition is appropriate for the audience. The student should be prepared to use frames such as: "Because Mr. X

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[2]How a student is to judge a potential tutor or editor's credentials is another question. Normally we would predict that the poor writer will simply not volunteer to help. On only one occasion that I can remember was that a problem (i.e., an incompetent editor volunteered). The student learned very quickly not to rely on that editor again!

likes to see lots of references in term papers I have. . ." or "Dr. X said that Dr. Y invented language, so. . ." The point is that the student needs to be able to describe for the editor who the audience is, whether or not that information is solicited. Likewise, if the student can state coherently what the purpose of the composition is to a tutor, chances are at least a few of the potential problems resulting from not focusing on the task can be avoided. One thing that the instructor can do for students in assigning essays is to make sure that they have a useable framework (including the appropriate "frames") for describing the logical structure involved in that type of essay. It is not enough that students merely understand what is to be done, they should be able to describe verbally and spontaneously, the assignments to someone else as well.

There are at least two other types of information that are relevant to the reader/editor: first, something regarding the development of the ideas in the composition or essay, and explicit instructions as to what you want the editor to do for you. It is always helpful to provide as much insight as possible into the process of creating that culminated in what is on paper. That may entail describing the type of invention technique/discovery procedure or heuristics (e.g., Daubney-Davis 1983) used, that is, the mental routines we construct for ourselves to help us retrieve and structure information from memory. It certainly means shedding as much light as possible on the importance, development and future disposition of the work.

DIRECTING THE EDITOR

There are a number of aspects of the learner's composition that the editor could be asked to attend to or operate upon. Some suggested areas and tasks are listed in Figure One. All four categories are reasonably clear and are such that most native speakers can, if the question is phrased correctly, provide feedback or assess the composition on that parameter.

Figure One: Editor Parameters

I. Mechanics	II. Syntax
Check spelling	Check grammar
Check for complete sentences	Identify main ideas
Check punctuation	Identify topic sentences
Check general appearance	Check register appropriateness
III. Coherence	**IV. Style**
Check logical structure	Assess persuasiveness
Check for coherence	Identify purpose/intent
Check for fact v. opinion	Assess objectivity
Check for essential v. non-essential	Check for interesting v. boring

A few items require some elaboration. "Register" basically refers to formal v. informal style. That is an important consideration, but one that is admittedly somewhat difficult to talk about. "Logical structure" is problematic, as mentioned earlier. The student must be able to explain something of the logical structure, e.g., cause and effect, chronological order, spatial ordering, which depends on the nature of the essay or paper being written. "Coherence" refers to relationships between successive sentences. Information about coherence can be elicited by saying something like: "Would you please look for places where a sentence doesn't follow from the one that precedes it?" or "Is there any place where. . .?"

From a functional perspective, there are several ways to give directions and make requests during a writer/editor conference.

Figure Two: Writer/Editor Functions and Examples

Function	Example
Giving directions	"Please try to ignore..."
	"Please just look at..."
	"What I would like you to do is..."
Requesting	
reactions	"How does X strike you?"
paraphrases	"How else can you say that?"
advice	"Does that sound X to you?"
	"What do you think I should...?"
suggestions	"What would be more X?"
	"What would be a better way to...?"
explanations	"Why can't you...?"
	"Exactly what do you...?"
clarifications	"What does X mean?"
honesty	"Please give me your honest opinion about...?"
evaluation	"How's my X?"
introducing	"I'm having difficulty with..."
re-inventing	"What I had in mind was..."
	"It seemed to me at the time that..."

There are many other ways available to accomplish the functions listed in Figure Two, as well as other speech acts that require such interactions. A basic point here is that it is not difficult to "discover" the ways in which native speakers talk about writing. That is, as students work on each others' compositions and practice talking about them, the important functions and expressions used in accomplishing them will be brought out normally - in the appropriate forms.

Although the focus here has been on the role of the writer, there is an equally interesting and fruitful amount of language work that can and must be done concerning what the editor says, especially when students are being trained to work in small composition correction groups. Training for such groups is beneficial in a number of ways, including teaching the writer the all-important concept of audience.

There are several potential benefits from an approach that focuses on the pragmatics of writing, writing as an essentially social act. Aside from more effective tutoring, whether free or otherwise, just the conceptualization of the editor is enough to assist some learners in developing better invention, monitoring and editing of their own writing. It is probably easier to organize one's thoughts about a piece of writing while preparing to tell another real person about the writing. One other attractive feature of this model is that it acknowledges and exploits one often neglected function of the foreign language teacher, namely, to prepare the learner to acquire language effectively beyond the classroom.

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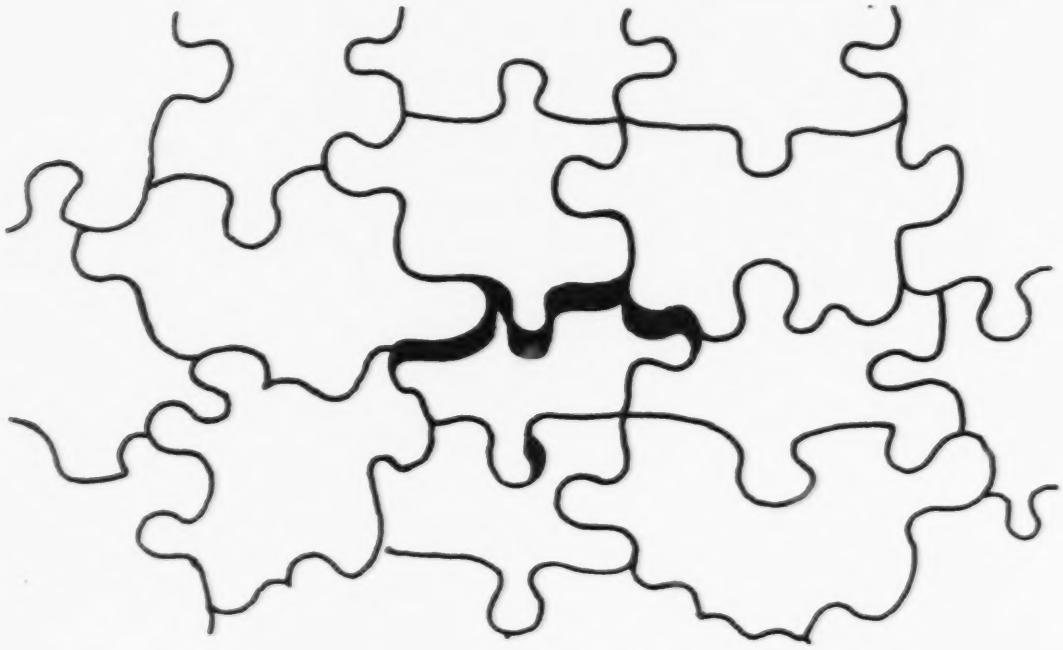

A REVIEW

Academic English, by Lee D. Rossi and Michael Gasser
(Prentice-Hall, 1983)

Martha Clough
University of Houston

Given the fact that pre-academic ESL is not an end in itself but rather a means of preparing students to enter a university and succeed there, an advanced-level core text needs to meet two criteria. It should provide an academic context for its langauge material and also present this material in such a way that students can see how it relates to their academic goals. Lee D. Rossi and Michael Gasser have fulfilled both these requirements in Academic English. The book is composed of thirteen units, each drawing its context from different fields in the biological sciences, the physical sciences and mathematics, and the social sciences and history. The repeated format consists of a reading or lecture followed by exercises in vocabulary, comprehension, notetaking, outlining, and relationships between ideas; and a language use section (really the heart of the unit) supplying explanations and communicative practice on various notions. The purpose of the language use section is not so much to present new material as to provide opportunities for meaningful application of the grammatical forms which students at this level have already studied but not yet mastered. (Lectures and exercise answers can be found in the accompanying Teacher's Guide.)

The book is not difficult to use, though the lessons require careful preparation, particularly if the teacher is a bit rusty on the finer points of oxidation-reduction reactions or nuclear particle physics. But the readings and lectures are factually accurate and clearly presented, and students enjoy the opportunity to show off their prior knowledge by fielding questions or giving additional information. The readings lend themselves to a variety of spin-offs such as vocabulary work, pronunciation, and paraphrasing, and the exercises that follow are useful ones. The comprehension questions require very careful reading or listening and can lead to animated class discussions with a minimum of teacher interference.

Teachers who like to attack grammatical structure in great detail still have that option when they use this book, but its advantage is that information regarding the forms is classified under meaningful communicative notions. This notional organization is much more logical and comprehensible than the structural organization into which the English language is still too often inadequately and artifically forced in textbooks. (Because supplementation may be necessary, each student should have a good reference grammar for home use.) The notional organization lends itself well to pairing with a good composition text, and the order of the units can be rearranged to correspond to an accompanying writing program's sequence of rhetorical notions such as physical description, classification, definition, process, narration, comparison/contrast, cause-effect, and speculation. In

addition to grammar, the language use section offers vocabulary basic to general higher education in the areas of description, property, experimentation and research, mathematical operations, and geographical location. Most units end with paragraph-writing activities that incorporate all the information just covered in the language use section.

Despite the book's considerable strengths, it has a few drawbacks, though nothing serious enough to have kept me from using it for the past three terms. One is that the grammatical explanations are sometimes unnecessarily detailed or too abstruse for students to follow. In such cases I found it useful to summarize the information to the class before going over it together in the book, or to lead into it in some way easier for the students to grasp. A second mild caveat is that the repetitious format (while helpful) may become monotonous, but a minimum of teacher-generated supplementation such as visual aids or situational practice can maintain student interest.

A more serious problem is that students at this level are preoccupied with the TOEFL to the point of hysteria and often strenuously resist instruction not presented in multiple-choice format. The teacher's response to this resistance can be that first, Academic English does prepare them: though the material is cleverly disguised as meaningful communication, a mastery of the information and skills in the book will convert very readily to all of the TOEFL's sections. Second, these skills and this information will carry them far beyond mere university entry to success in their coursework, whether at an undergraduate or a graduate level. Another student objection may be that there is no more than one unit on any given person's major, and some popular fields (computer science, engineering, technology) are conspicuously absent (an omission which I hope the authors will redress in the second edition: these could replace, say, the readings on the classification of the horse or the sociology of the Navajo). This is the unavoidable weakness of providing a variety of academic contexts, but it has far more value than the alternative of choosing just one subject matter and thus missing most of the class entirely. At any rate, the core of the book is the language use section in the second half of each unit, and a command of the notions and vocabulary presented is basic to the expression of every well-educated native speaker of English and will be presupposed at the university level. And the exposure to a variety of subject matters will stand undergraduates-to-be in particularly good stead.

In short, the book's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses, which can easily be circumvented. I found Academic English stimulating and rewarding to teach from and recommend it highly. It is exactly the text I was looking for at the advanced pre-academic level.

A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Now in its seventh year of publication, TECFORS has a faithful and growing readership. In particular, we welcome those who joined us after hearing about TECFORS at the TESOL Convention in Houston. TECFORS will continue to grow as long as its readers support it by renewing their subscriptions and by telling their colleagues about TECFORS.

Actually, the frequent notes, responses, and comments that we receive from subscribers give us the feeling that TECFORS is not just a journal, but rather a "society" with "members" rather than subscribers.

As members of TECFORS, then, you are invited to send your creative contributions -- your manuscripts, reactions to articles, book reviews, or announcements.

Our purpose: to publish concise, useful articles on any topic related to the teaching of writing and reading to ESL and bilingual adult students.

Areas of interest: reading, reading skills, vocabulary, composition evaluation, program supervision, composing processes, English grammar, rhetorical structures, cultural influences, revising, correcting, methodology, teaching specific populations (bilingual Spanish speakers, etc.), writing across the curriculum, and many more.

Format: Articles should normally be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed. Longer articles are welcome if they can be divided into a series.

Articles received a month before the month of publication are considered for the coming issue. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing

and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

Volume VII September 1984 Number 4

PRE-READING: A NEGLECTED SKILL IN LOWER-LEVEL ESL CLASSES?

Vivian Hafley and Roberta Vann
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Reading specialists agree that a student's "conceptual readiness" is necessary for successful ESL reading. Clarke and Silberstein (1979:49) state that "skill in reading depends on the efficient interaction between linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world. Students must have 'conceptual readiness' for each task: reading activities must either hook into the students' knowledge of the world, or the teacher must fill in the gaps before the task is begun." As the reading material becomes conceptually more "foreign," the teacher's task as gap-filler becomes increasingly more important.

Teachers get little or no help from textbooks in how to "fill in the gap." Most lower-level ESL reading texts do not provide teachers with direct means of teaching effective pre-reading strategies. Typical pre-reading exercises focus on vocabulary development, directing the teacher or student to pronounce or define the list of new vocabulary. While such an exercise may help pronunciation, it does not build conceptual readiness, and there is no evidence to suggest that such an exercise promotes better reading comprehension (Johnson, 1982).

One pre-reading exercise appearing more frequently is the use of discussion questions which relate generally to the reading assignment. These questions are designed to motivate students and prepare them for

what they are about to read. While well-designed pre-reading questions can do much to build conceptual readiness, they limit both teacher and student to one type of pre-reading strategy.

In our program, we have three primary means by which we increase students' link between linguistic knowledge and world knowledge--what reading theorists call "schema-building."

The first is through the use of schema-building media including slides, pictures, films, tapes, records, or realia such as objects or food brought into the classroom, or field trips. Students in our Level 1 reading class (entering TOEFL scores of approximately 350-380) watch sets of relevant slides prior to reading. These slides not only elicit vocabulary and discussion, but also help familiarize students with the topic before they read. We made the slides ourselves, using a camera set up to photograph pictures from magazines, newspapers, and postcards.

The slides are a very efficient way to schema-building, but sometimes we use an even more direct method, which is more effective but not always feasible. Chapter 3 of our book Viewpoints U.S.A. concerns fruit and vegetable "pick it yourself" farms. As a pre-reading activity, our students go on their own strawberry-picking excursion. This is followed by a strawberry shortcake-making party at a teacher's house. This pre-reading exercise not only develops vocabulary introduced in the chapter (basket, rows, pick, cut, mix, etc.) but also allows students to hear and use oral expressions appearing in the text. Furthermore, the trip helps the students to understand the North American custom of picking fruits and vegetables for fun rather than as a source of income.

We also use a pre-reading discussion elicited by the use of realia or by questions in several forms. We begin with provocative questions in the what-do-you-think format. The purpose of these questions is to have students make comparisons between what they are familiar with (for example, education in their own culture) and what they are less familiar with (adult or continuing education in the U.S.). The pre-reading discussion can lead to students forming lists of pre-conceived ideas and notions concerning the text. For example, we might ask students to make a list of their ideas about a rodeo and why people participate in one, or their ideas about how the elderly live in the United States. Then after reading the text, the lists can be verified or refuted. This technique capitalizes on student experience, builds expectations, and enables the student to make predictions about the text to be read.

A third pre-reading strategy is based on direct contact with the reading materials. This strategy (used by many readers, though not always transferred to another language) involves surveying titles, headings, and captions in anticipation of what is to be read. Such a technique not only increases student familiarity with the text, but increases reading comprehension and speed as well. Teachers who wish to provide their students with this effective procedure may want to review the SQ

(Survey Question) part of the SQ3R method (Yorkey, 1970). The strategy of surveying and questioning, while somewhat more advanced than pre-reading discussion, is a valuable one for students as it can be readily transferred to other types of reading.

Chapter 12 of Viewpoints is suitable for this kind of technique. Students first survey the text by looking at the title ("Growing Thin is Big Business"), the before-weight-loss and the after-weight-loss pictures, the heading ("Read this passage to find out more about the diet club, Weight Watchers"), the low-calorie menu, and the ad for a health spa. Next, students are asked to formulate questions that will help them locate specific information--questions such as "Who is losing weight?", "How?", "Why?", and "Why is losing weight a big business?"

Of the three primary means of schema building, realia, discussion, and surveying and questioning, no single technique is suitable for all reading tasks (as is evidenced by the use of three techniques to teach different chapters in our text). The length of time spent on each technique would depend on the concepts of the particular reading assignment. The more conceptually "foreign" the assignment, the more time needed for schema-building. (It is not unusual for us to spend a full 50-minute class period on schema-building and pre-reading strategies.) Time spent in choosing an appropriate technique and implementing it will not only help increase students' understanding of a reading assignment, but will help build strategies which can be utilized in future academic and professional reading.

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A TECPORS FORUM ARTICLE

Using Student Essays: Some Issues for ESL and Remedial Composition Classes

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The situation: At San Diego State all students are required to pass an entrance level writing examination, either a 45 minute essay (the EPT) or the ETS multiple-choice "writing" examination, the TSWE. If students do not achieve the appropriate minimum scores on these examinations, they must enroll in and pass an Academic Skills developmental writing course (110) before registering in freshman English or upper-division classes. The emphasis in the 110 classes is upon the global aspects of discourse, on paragraph and thesis development, unity and coherence and other discourse-level features. The curriculum committee for this class is now including reading as well as writing in the syllabus. The readings provide data for summaries and for student writing that is more academic than personal.

The students: There is no 110 class designated for ESL or international students, so the non-native speakers (about 30% of all 110 students) are sprinkled throughout the classes and given extra assistance by class tutors when the instructors deem it necessary. The majority of the non-native speakers are Indo-Chinese, though there are other Asian students, some Hispanics and a small percentage of Middle Eastern students.

The Post-110 Class, Academic Skills 150: Fifty percent or more of the students who complete 110 do not pass the writing competency examination. They are required to register for the second developmental course, Academic Skills 150, which is my responsibility. As you can imagine, an even higher percentage of the students in these classes (about 45% of the 300 students) is either Hispanic, Indo-Chinese or foreign.

Classes are small (8-20 students) and taught, for the most part, by tutors trained in linguistics, rhetoric, foreign languages or English. Each tutor is responsible for eight to ten students. In 150, there are designated ESL classes, though non-native speakers often appear in native-speaker classes because they have schedule conflicts with the designated ones.

Some 150 issues: Problems abound in the 150 classes. They involve motivation, since the students are discouraged and often angry about having failed writing competency twice. They involve the variety of student needs, since some students still need essay-level work, some have insufficient prior knowledge, others require instruction in grammar, especially verbs, and most need help in a number of these areas.

Therefore, we have to motivate and individualize--but we also must provide a program for them which identifiably is different from their previous Academic Skills class.

The First 150 Curriculum: Most of the students in the Center--and most of the instructors--believe that using models for writing is a good idea. In 110, there are a number of instructors who require published textbooks with professional or prize-winning student essays as models. But the 150 students complain that the essays in these textbooks are too good, that students such as they could never produce an essay to meet the high standards set by the instructors through these textbooks. Therefore, when developing materials I decided to use passing essays from our own 110 classes, with their spelling, subject-verb agreement and other flaws, as examples for the 150 student workbook. I then prepared exercises which drew students' attention to the essay, paragraph and sentence levels of these examples. The sets of exercises following the essays varied considerably, since I wanted both students and tutors to consider a number of features and to apply the questions to their own essays as they produced them. I have included one student essay and question set here.

The Response: No one who taught 150 was neutral about the material which I prepared. Most of those who used the questions and generalized from them felt that they, and the essays, were useful. Others tried but decided that the material was not usable because the questions were too hard, because the essays were not on topics that students generally write about, or because there was no work which the students could do in their essay and exercise books. Another group ignored the student book as much as possible because they objected to the use of flawed student essays ("There are errors in these!"), because they chose to use their own materials, or because they felt that their academic freedom was infringed upon when the mandated essay book was issued.

Since there was so much disagreement, I created a committee made up of people who took the various sides and put them to work. Somewhat independent of me, they have decided upon another booklet of both student and prize-winning essays, with exercises in a tutor handbook rather than in the student workbook.

A Request for Your Response: Our use of these essays and exercises has inspired a certain amount of healthy debate at the Academic Skills Center about our mission and about the types of materials which our most discouraged and least motivated students need. We at TECFORS would very much like to hear what you have to say about these issues and will devote space in the newsletter to your reactions to my problems and materials or responses to the questions below:

1. Student essays: Do you use flawed student essays? For what purposes? Do you believe that students should have better examples than they produce?
2. Exercises: What types of exercises are best suited for the ESL student in an academic environment? We use controlled composition quite successfully; otherwise, we see little transfer from exercises to the students' own work. What is good and bad about the exercises and questions I have developed?
3. Essay type: What type(s) of essays should the academic student be required to produce? Is the personal essay an important medium, or is something more academic preferable?

These are some of the problems which we are grappling with at San Diego State. TECFORS would very much like to hear from you about possible solutions. You may write to Ann H. Johns, Academic Skills and Linguistics, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182-1900.

A Student Essay and Exercises

Kathleen Johnson
Fall 1983
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Life After Forty

When my family celebrates my mother's birthday, it is difficult for me to understand why she does not show any enthusiasm or excitement. As a matter of fact, the only emotion she seems to exhibit is depression as well as discontent. Why is the majority of people afraid of getting older? In my opinion, youth is a state of mind that should be exercised in a positive way so we can always be happy regardless of our ages. With age we gain wisdom and maturity; two important traits that contribute to ones well being. By observing my own parents' attitudes and expectations, I take the view that becoming older is not something to look down upon but as a physical and mental development to cherish. Aging may be the best part of life.

It is frustrating for me to see my parents come home from work everyday with same feelings and thoughts on their minds. To others, they both seem to reveal an expression which lacks fulfillment and satisfaction. They have fallen into a routine that they probably believe will never change or somehow can't change. And because of this monotonous routine, my parents do not experience new and exciting situations. From looking at their life externally, I have repeatedly told myself that I will never fall into that same type of pattern which only establishes a tedious rut. Many times I wonder if my parents believe that, because their children are now living lives of their own and seem to have no future ambitions, the time to really enjoy life is gone. This attitude of the latter is quite upsetting because I expect people, no matter what their age, to live their lives to the fullest. The older generations should put forth as much effort as possible to succeed at their goals and personal accomplishments. Turning forty or experiencing the middle age should never make one give up living new experiences, for there is always more room to grow. I have used my parents as an example because, in my opinion, they are not growing creatively and are not learning unique and different traits about themselves, only because they are not willing to take challenging risks to change their future.

Older people may believe that it is unavoidable to feel sad and lonely as the years drift by. That is an acceptable and understandable emotion because we all know we are going to die, and so when we become older we feel the impact of death more distinctively. As a result of negative, depressing, attitudes,

many older people do not live up to their full potentials simply because they believe they would never be able to. Maybe being afraid of death results in being afraid to live. Although physical capabilities may be lessened, people who are in their last years of life should never deprive themselves of something important because of their age. I also want to stress that the mental state that one attains strongly affects the way one behaves or acts. When I feel, no matter what my age, that I could never accomplish or achieve my realistic goals, I probably never will. So the types of attitudes that we take enhance our perception on life; furthermore, those attitudes may be destructive or constructive, that depends on the individual.

In contrast to most older people I know, there is an inspiring exception. She is a lady of eighty years who is basically living with the times. And because she changes with the generations, she is one person who not only lives up to her potential but expands it. I admire her and hope that when I become her age will seek every available opportunity that comes my way. To live the times as they are, not as they were ten years ago is one of my main goals in life. Establishing an attitude of the latter, I believe we can live everyday being happy and constantly obtain the feeling of satisfaction.

My theory of thought during this day is to live each day as creative as possible; to experience exciting moments, and utilize those experiences to grow, for life is only as special as its moments.

Questions on "Life after Forty"

1. Paragraph and essay structure:

a. Look at the introduction, for it is there that the writer sets the tone, draws in the reader and often presents a thesis. One technique used frequently in the introduction is question posing. Note the question in this introduction. Why is the question there? Does the writer answer it directly? Why or why not?

b. What is the thesis of this essay? Is it stated or implied? If stated, where is it located? If implied, what is it? (Note: Though it is quite acceptable to have an implied thesis, it is dangerous for the novice writer to use one for at least two reasons: since the thesis makes a promise to the reader, not only of the topic but what the writer will say about the topic, the reader can sometimes misread what is intended if the thesis is not explicitly stated. And, since the writer may need the guidance of an explicit thesis for planning, it is also advisable to state and use one.)

c. In the classic five-paragraph essay, such as the "Apple Plant Job," the thesis is stated; then the writer provides a number of points to support, explain or illustrate his/her contention. Though this essay is successful because it is a coherent unit, it does not follow the classic pattern.

If the reader were to assume that one of the two final sentences of the introduction is the thesis, he/she would have to assume that the parents are the examples of the view "that becoming older is not something to look down upon but ...a physical and mental development to cherish." In fact the parents are counter-examples. (Because of this, the author feels that she has to defend using them as examples. Where is this done?)

Because of the nature of the thesis and the examples, paragraphs 2 and 3 are in the contrast mode. Briefly state how this is done by answering the questions below:

1. Paragraph 2
   What is the main idea of the first three sentences?
   What is the point made in the remainder of the paragraph?
2. Paragraph 3
   What is the major idea of the first four sentences?
   How does the remainder of the paragraph provide a contrast?

d. What is the function of the fourth paragraph? Is it successful?

e. The conclusion is very short in this essay. Generally the conclusion summarizes the main points of the essay and draws a conclusion from them. What has the writer done here? Does she successfully conclude by doing this?

f. The author tells the reader quite a bit about herself in this essay. There is a real persona. What do you know about her? Is anything she tells you off the point (i.e. inconsistent with the thesis)?

2. Sentences

a. The most straightforward way to organize a sentence is with simple subject or noun phrase, a verb, and if the verb is transitive, an object. The first sentence in paragraph 2, then, could be stated as "My parents come home every day with .... This attitude of my parents frustrates me." However, if all sentences, or even most of them, were organized this way, the writer would not be able to emphasize what is most important to her or to keep the reader interested. Why does this author choose to begin this sentence with, "It is frustrating to me ... ?"

Towards the end of the paragraph is this sentence: "Turning forty and experiencing the middle age should never ...." A simpler way to express this idea would be to say: "A person turns forty. This should never make one ...." Why did the author choose the arrangement of words which appears in the essay? What does it do to the meaning of the sentence?

Notice how the first sentence in paragraph four is organized. The main clause is "There is an inspiring exception." Why didn't the author begin the sentence with the main clause?

As was stated earlier, transition words are the most powerful of all signals to the reader about how the writer's points will progress through the essay. This author, like many English language writers, seldom uses them. In the final sentence of paragraph 3, she used SO and FURTHERMORE. What are the functions of these transition words in the sentence?

In addition to transition words, the author achieves coherence (i.e. a unified essay) through other means, by continuing with her theme throughout the essay, and making every example appropriate to the point that she is making. In every sentence, she provides given (already mentioned) information and new (not previously mentioned) information which, in many cases, is additional detail for the points she has already made. (We call this not-so-new information "semi-new.") Look, for example, at the sentences in paragraph 2:

Sentence 1: Given: "me, my parents"
New: "Come home from work every day"
Semi-new: "same feelings and thoughts" (subordinate to the "lack of excitement" mentioned in the introduction)

Sentence 2: Given: "they"
New: "to others" (i.e. those looking from outside. This provides the writer's viewpoint, distancing her from her parents' attitudes.)
Semi-new: "reveal an expression" (see sentence 1)

Sentence 3: Given: "they"
New: "routine" (of life)
Semi-new: "believe can't change or will never change" (see "feelings and thoughts," sentence 1)

Sentence 4: Given: "monotonous routine" (see sentence 3)
New: "don't experience"

This pattern continues until the seventh sentence, when the writer becomes more intimately involved in the problem:

Sentence 7: Given: "This attitude of the latter..."
New: "is quite upsetting."
"I expect people..."

Sentence 8: Given: "The older generations..."
Semi-new: "put forth the effort."

As can be seen from this chart, sentences 1-6 are very closely linked. Very little is new information; therefore, very little can stray from the topic or the writer's point of view. When she wants to change viewpoint from that of an objective observer to someone who is involved, the writer carefully indicates that change to the reader in sentence 7. There may be a moral to this: within a paragraph there is very little truly new information, and viewpoints change only if carefully indicated.

c. Why use commas? Writers use them like traffic signals to indicate to the reader a variation form the standard simple sentence. Sometimes commas are used to mark off a group of words (a phrase or a clause) that comes before the main clause in the sentence. In paragraph 2, for example, there is "From looking at their life externally, I HAVE...." Can you find other examples in which commas mark off introductory phrases or clauses?

ERRATA

In "Methods for Teaching Academic Writing" by Daniel M. Horowitz and Macey B. McKee, March1984, "the casual chain" should be "the causal chain." Our apologies!

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CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

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A UNIQUE COLLOQUIUM ON WRITING

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A panel of colloquium speakers will discuss current research in six areas:

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Selected participants will meet in small groups with a colloquium speaker to discuss their research, proposed research, or institution-specific issues.

TO BE A PARTICIPANT: Interested researchers, teachers, graduate students, and program developers are invited to submit abstracts of research in progress, proposals, or descriptions of particular program needs in one of the six above areas.

Send two copies of abstract with name, address, affiliation, and telephone number by January 15, 1984 to:

Martha Clough
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WHEN ASIANS WRITE: WHAT TO EXPECT IN RHETORIC

Mark Picus
Humanities Division
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For the November 1983 issue of TECFORS, I wrote an article concerning common grammatical problems found in the writing of Asian students. This current article carries the idea of what we can expect from Asian students into the realm of rhetoric. In addition to typical grammatical and syntactical errors and patterns, Asians exhibit certain semantic and rhetorical traits when writing English, and they employ some easily recognizable rhetorical strategies.

The first rhetorical strategy that teachers of Asian students must be aware of is memorization. This is most commonly found among the Vietnamese and can be attributed to the traditional Vietnamese system of education. School books are not available to all students in Vietnam, so students learn by copying what the teacher has written on the board and by memorizing from a book and reciting, word by word, to the rest of the class. Many Vietnamese have adapted their highly developed memorization skills to their new school milieu. It is not hard for an ESL teacher to recognize memorized material; it often contains more advanced vocabulary and sentence structure than the student has ever produced before, and it frequently has little to do with the assignment at hand. The following examples will illustrate this. Example 1 was a response to an exercise involving the present perfect continuous tense. The students were shown a picture and asked to write a sentence describing the scene using the targeted tense. A picture of two people in swim suits, dripping wet, and rubbing themselves with towels, produced this response:

1. They have been unburdening their hearts on the seashore.

Example 2 is from an essay in which the student was to describe a special and well-remembered place:

2. When I attend in the college. I remembered a school I were attended where I grew up. The school was besides the road. On bothe sides of the road. There were many trees.
   In my schoolroom. There were many trees and plants too. The tall old maps and oaks marched right down to the grassy shoulder. The green of their branches was full and rich and the tops of the trees were heavy with splinters of moving sun light.

Both examples show a use of metaphor that was lacking in these students' other writings. Example 2 contains both the student's usual, simple sentence structure (which shows a lack of knowledge of sentence boundaries) and two more complicated, but well formed sentences. In addition, both students have used these memorized sentences where they

do not belong. In the drawing referred to in Example 1, a swimming pool was clearly pictured, and the two characters portrayed shared no apparent romantic involvement. In Example 2, we have maps marching and sun light in trees, all inside a schoolroom!

Another common rhetorical feature of Asians' writing is the anti-communist preoccupation. This is most common among the Vietnamese and Cambodians and is less used by the Taiwanese and South Koreans. These students will use any writing assignment as an opportunity to express their hatred of communists and the communist system. The reasons behind this trend should be clear to anyone with even a basic knowledge of recent Asian history, but the creativity and fervor with which these students state their case is remarkable. Examples 3-8 were all written by students in an intermediate grammar class as isolated sentences on homework assignments. Following each example is a description of the type of sentence the student was asked to produce.

3. I hate communism. (verb + gerund)
4. It's impossible to destroy communism. (it's & adj. + infinitive)
5. I'll go back to my homeland unless communism is gone there. (unless - notice the incorrect use of "unless")
6. I wish my brother would escape from the hands of the Communists. (wish + would)
7. Almost all of the Viet Nam are worried about liberating their country. (be worried about + gerund)
8. I object to the Communist being so cruel and crazy. (object to + gerund)

Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of these sentences is that they were not written in any thematic context. The various assignments all required the student to complete or produce sentences that contained a specific grammatical structure. These highly political and personal sentences appeared among such mundane responses as "I hate waking up early," "I'll go to the beach unless it rains," "We are worried about passing the test," and others containing typical subjects students often write about.

But this attention to communism also frequently appears in longer writing samples, as seen in Example 9, the introduction to a multi-paragraph essay.

9. I have found a safe refuge here in United States following our hasty departure from Vietnam where the Communist took over our country. I have attended classes at HCC for almost two years and have come to realize every country has its own culture. Especially at the college, the role of teacher is different from that of the Vietnamese.

This student has written a decent introductory paragraph. It is clear that the essay will go on to compare and contrast the roles of college

teachers in Vietnam and the U.S. The thesis statement is placed at the end of the paragraph and can easily lead into the body of the essay. The purpose of the first sentence is ostensibly to show that the writer has lived in two countries. But the author uses rather emotional terms (safe refuge, hasty departure, took over) to refer to the communists and never mentions them again. The essay discusses teachers in pre-communist Vietnam only.

Another rhetorical aspect of the writing of Asians is often the most frustrating for American teachers. It is common for Asian writers to show extreme deference to their readers--speaking directly to them, appealing to their ego, and clearly stating simple and obvious points to insure that a reader will not feel inadequate due to a lack of comprehension. Notice the use of questions in Example 10, in which the student was telling about a time he received good advice.

> 10. In 1979, I received an order to participate in the in the communist army. It would be all right if the communist did not occupy my South of Vietnam. Do you know that no one likes the communists in my country right now?... I planned to run away or to commit suicide myself... my family... tried to stop me from realizing that crazy idea, but the more they said the more I was really excited to do it. You sure know how is the character of a young man, do you?

If the first question in the above example were rephrased as a statement -- "No one likes the communists in my country right now" -- readers not aware of that "fact" might be confronted with their own lack of knowledge. But the author poses a question, asking if his readers are aware of that "fact," and any reader can easily answer, "No, I didn't know that." A question such as this does not assume previous knowledge on the part of the readers. A statement, however, can be interpreted to assume previous knowledge.

The second question in Example 10 does assume previous, but universal, knowledge. In fact, it is really a statement which assures readers that everything they have suspected about the stubbornness, bravery, and idealism of young men is true. But in case a reader has been particularly out of touch with reality for a while, a tag question is there to allow a reader the face-saving opportunity to say, "No, I didn't know."

Example 11 contains further examples of questions showing extreme deference to the audience. They are from a pamphlet published by a Christian church in Taiwan with the purpose of evangelizing Jews.

> 11. All the schoolmates of mine at the University of China watched and looked at the vision without anyone calling it not wonderful and their praises over the vision kept coming out of their mouth! May I ask,

who could show us this vision?
We greatly believe that God showed us this vision. to us -- a group of Chinese students, there must be his set will in it! Dear reader, would you agree with me on this?!

Again, great pains have been taken not to offend the reader in any way. The author leads the reader from one point in the argument to another and occasionally stops for reassurance that the reader is indeed following along.

Example 12 is a particularly revealing instance of deferential Asian rhetoric. It is an exercise taken from A Writer's Workbook, Form D, by Lee, Legget, and Valdes. In this particular exercise, a number of possible essay beginnings are given, and the student must evaluate their effectiveness. Negative aspects for which the introductions are to be evaluated are ineffective abruptness, irrelevant material, and apologetic tone.

12. The Smallest Butterfly in the Case
I guess this theme isn't going to be very interesting to most people, since they don't care about butterflies. Whoever reads this probably never collected butterflies or thought of collecting them, but I do know a little about it.

In an advanced ESL composition class, all of the Asian students thought this would be an appropriate essay introduction. They praised it for its honesty, politeness, and humility. They said that if the author didn't think the topic would be interesting, he should say so, and one should never assume that what one has to say is interesting to someone else. They all agreed this would be an acceptable introduction (or even conclusion) to an essay written in their native language. (The one non-Asian in the class had no strong opinion about the exercise.) However, example 12 would be unacceptable as an introduction to most, if not all, English composition teachers. It violates rules of assertiveness and expression which are accepted parts of standard English rhetoric. It obviously does not violate rhetorical rules that Asian students may have learned in their native environment.

The strategy that many ESL students have of transferring rhetorical devices from one language to another is a major problem for ESL teachers. ESL students must be made aware of acceptable English rhetorical patterns and taught how to use them, just as native English speakers are. But much of this rhetorical pattern transference is probably quite automatic, and learning new strategies won't necessarily get rid of old ones. Being aware of the common rhetorical characteristics of Asian students--memorization, anti-communistic preoccupation, and deference to the reader--can aid in their recognition, which is the first step towards helping students employ more standard English rhetorical styles.

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A CCH NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT

Joy Reid, the editor of the Curriculum Clearing House Newsletter, has announced a major change in CCHN's name, format, and size. Now to be the Teachers, Texts, and Technology in Language Education Review, or the TTT Review, this publication will both continue its present columns like "The Author's Corner" and have several new columns, including "The Network," "Notices and Services," "Media News," and an "Adventurer's Index." Each issue will have a guest editor, but articles about all areas of curriculum and reviews of new ESL texts and materials will still be solicited. The Review--to contain about 64 pages--will be published quarterly by Lin Lougheed, President of Instructional Design International. The October issue will be supported entirely by advertising. To subscribe, write Joy Reid, Intensive English Program, Colorado State University, 01 Old Economics Building, Fort Collins, CO 80523.

TECFORS is published five times a year--in January, March, May, September and November.

Send subscription requests ($4.00 per year; $7.00 for two years; $6.50 per year abroad or $12.00 for two years abroad) to Nancy V. Lee at her address below. Manuscripts and correspondence may be sent to any of the editors. Articles should normally be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed. Longer articles are welcome if they can be divided into a series.

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TECFORS

A newsletter for instructors of writing

and reading to ESL and bi-lingual (adult) students

Volume VII November 1984 Number 5

RENEWAL TIME IS HERE

Since TECFORS is operated by the calendar year, it is time for all but the (cherished) two-year subscribers to renew their subscriptions.

Please note your subscription status after your name on the address label. The last year of your subscription, according to our records, will be written there. (If this date is incorrect, please let us know.) All of those who see '84 as the last date are invited to rejoin the TECFORS circle.

The subscription rates continue to be the usual non-profit ones of $4.00 per year or $7.00 for two years, and $6.50 per year abroad or $12.00 for two years abroad.

Please fill out the renewal form on the last page and send it with your check to Nancy V. Lee, Department of English, University of Houston-University Park, Houston, Texas, 77004.

Our holidays will be merry indeed if all of you renew this week!

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO GERUND/INFINITIVE COMPLEMENTS

Mary Lindeman
University of Houston

One of the most difficult grammatical points for ESL students to learn is the gerund and infinitive complements of verbs. This is approached in various ways by texts, usually listing words under the headings "verbs that take the gerund" and "verbs that take the infinitive." This might have limited application for student compositions, since the word lists can be

used for reference. Depending on lists, however, does not assure mastery of the language. Another method frequently used is memorization. This, too, has limited success and is frustrating to students who experience a lack of any systematic way of conceptualizing how native speakers so readily distinguish between the gerund and infinitive complements. The problem is compounded by the fact that native speakers also have no idea of how they made this distinction.

Several creative paradigms, both structural and semantic have been proposed to systematize this seemingly unsystematic phenomenon.[1] While a useful beginning in the attempt to clarify the usage of gerund and infinitive complements, these paradigms are often fragmented or too complex to serve as useful pedagogical tools. Students and teachers in the day-to-day process of ESL usually find rules useful to clarify what linguists know in more theoretical terms and what native speakers know unconsciously.

After years of teaching this subject by rote, hoping that given enough exposure, students would learn it, I attempted to create another approach. If a native speaker knows exactly which type of complement is appropriate after a given verb, how does he or she know? Is the selection a process of using the sound of the paired-associate words? If so, then the method for teaching would be the memorization of the paired associates. This seemed a relatively ineffective approach since I had observed students reverting to the complements used in L_1 even after intensive practice. The memory method seemed pedagogically weak; thus my next approach was again to question whether there was indeed a "rule." If so, a native speaker would know and apply it systematically and unconsciously.

One of the ways of modeling unconscious langauge processing is to use a representational system strategy, i.e., an outline of the sensory modalities invoked (Dilts, et. al, 1980). A successful learning strategy, for example, might be structured with a visual mode → auditory mode → kinesthetic mode. A language user would see something, either real or imaginary, make a statement about that visual experience, and then have a positive or negative feeling about the visual and auditory representations just made. This is one common strategy of information processing, and it is out of the awareness of the language user (Phoenix and Lindeman, 1984).

My method of seeking a paradigm for the gerund/infinitive complements was to reverse this strategy, beginning with the kinesthetic mode. This would, I hoped, make the unconscious conscious and lead to a rule for gerund/infinitive complements. The query. "What does a native speaker feel (kinesthetic mode) when choosing a complement?" led to the following distinction: a gerund complement "feels" progressive, continuous; an infinitive complement "feels" goal-directed, purposeful. For example, He remembered closing the door emphasizes an action. He remembered to close the door implies a goal directed intention. A native speaker might feel this distinction intuitively. This type of distinction was the starting point for a series of finer divisions leading to the following paradigm.

I would like to point out that this is a pedagogical tool and is not intended to be an exhaustive description of all possible uses of the gerund and infinitive. It has been simplified in order to enhance learning for the foreign student, who is usually overwhelmed by traditional approaches.

Infinitive Complement

1. Many verbs which can have a direct object take an infinitive whether or not the object is expressed.

expect	hire	advise
need	invite	allow
prepare	obligate	cause

He needs to study.
They need him to help with the work.

Whenever these verbs appear with a direct object, they take an infinitive rather than a gerund.

The registrar advised him to apply early.
The contract obligated John to pay high interest.

2. If a verb takes an infinitive in the active voice, it will take an infinitive in the passive voice.

	We persuaded John to go to Madrid.
to be persuaded to	John was persuaded to go to Madrid.
to be allowed to	The authorities allow people to swim here.
	People are allowed to swim here.

3. Purposeful verbs, denoting stages of goal setting, take the infinitive. The stages are desire, intention, decision, implementation, and result.

Desire: want to, hope to, care to, desire to
Intention: mean to, intend to, promise to, plan to
Decision: agree to, refuse to, consent to
Implementation: learn to, hesitate to, pretend to
Result: fail to, appear to, seem to, get to, grow to

After many years of hard work, he got to go to Hawaii for a month's vacation.

NOTE: "Succeed in" and "plan on" although purposeful, take the gerund since they are followed by "in" or "on."

Gerund Complement

Verbs taking a gerund complement have a sense of ongoing action or immediacy.

1. Generally, a verb which expresses ongoing action takes a gerund.

practice	Practice skating.
keep	
risk	

2. Many verbs which express a mental state or feeling without purposefulness take a gerund. (Interior states are continuous and ongoing.)

enjoy	They enjoy painting.
appreciate	
understand	
consider	
image	

The possessive adjective plus gerund follows this rule.

I appreciate your coming early.

3. Certain verbs which express communication (without objects or "for") take the gerund.

admit	deny	suggest
		advise

Some verbs which express communication take the infinitive, but these usually also take objects or the "for" construction.

demand	They offered for him to come.
ask	Mary asked John to help her.
offer	

4. Other verbs taking the gerund express a break in ongoing action.

stop	avoid	give up
finish	postpone	
get through	quit	

5. Any word followed by a preposition takes a gerund.

succeed in	keep from	object to
keep on	prevent from	admit to
plan on	stop from	

Verbs Taking Both Gerund and Infinitive Complements

Some verbs take either complement, depending on the meaning the speaker wishes to convey.

I didn't remember to close the door.
I didn't remember closing the door.

Many verbs of perception take both gerund and unmarked infinitive in the active, and a gerund in the passive.

They saw him drive/driving a sports car.
He was seen driving a sports car.

Such verbs are:

see
hear
smell
feel

Other verbs of perception take only the gerund in both cases.

They observed him painting a portrait.
He was observed painting a portrait.

Such verbs are:

observe
catch*
find*

* in the sense of "observe"

This schema combines three structural and five semantic items. This mixture of unlike elements is a disadvantage as far as providing a tight linguistic system. But for purposes of teaching students to speak and write English, it is a definite advantage because it allows learners to gather large quantities of information under the umbrella of smaller,

manageable categories. However generalized those categories may be, they can function as a workable and useful classroom tool.

This paradigm of teaching the complements can be taught (and has been) at all levels of ESL. Even beginners can grasp these basic concepts, while advanced students can make finer distinctions. One suggested method of teaching is a series of spiraling steps.

1. Introduce a written fill-in-the-blank exercise.

   Let students guess the correct word. Eventually, someone will ask what the "rule" is.

2. Put the rule on the blackboard in abbreviated form. Hand out a lengthier explanation later, giving specific words and examples of usage.

Infinitive TO	Gerund ING
1. Direct object	1. Action
2. Goal, plan, decision	2. Mental state, feeling
	3. Communications
	4. Stop
	5. In, on, etc.

This abbreviated rule should be put on the board each time the lesson is taught, which should be at least five or six times at spaced intervals.

3. After teaching the rule, finish the exercise; and after each item, ask students to select the correct "rule" for that verb and complement. They are soon able to do this easily and accurately.

4. At intervals over the next two weeks, do three or four more exercises in class or assign homework to be checked in class. Again, after each item in the exercises, students must select the correct rule for that verb.

5. After students have a good grasp of both new vocabulary and the rule, flash cards can be used for further practice. Each card might have two verbs, such as enjoy and ski. The instructor creates a contextual sentence such as "Michael enjoys _____" and students say "skiing." Later, pairs of students use the cards for classroom practice. Here students create their own contextual sentences and self-check the complement, which is written on the back of each card.

6. A game can be played with the sentences in step 1 and 3. Each sentence is paired with an answer. For example:

   Why did Michael go to Colorado last winter?
   Michael enjoys skiing.

   Each sentence is written on a strip of paper and the strips distributed randomly among the students. Their task as a group is to reassemble all the correct pairs.

These are just a few suggestions on teaching gerund/infinitive complements to ESL students. Much more can be done to develop contextualized lessons, using both left and right brain techniques. Throughout, the material should be integrated into whatever large context serves as the focus of curriculum. This paradigm can be taught briefly, emphasizing to students its simplicity and their own competence in learning it easily.

FOOTNOTES

[1] For a detailed description of the usage of gerund/infinitive complements see Zandvoort (1966). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983) provide an excellent review of other approaches.

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Designer Grading: Tailored for ESL and Developmental Students*

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Current teaching trends in rhetoric and composition, especially in the ESL and developmental classroom, focus on the individual student--developing his interest in writing by emphasizing his strengths and calling attention to his writing faults in the most constructive manner possible. Thus, to meet each student's needs as fully as possible, we composition instructors have been known to find ourselves still awake at 3:00 a.m., or thereabouts, forcing ourselves to finish marking a set of compositions so that they will be graded and garnished with lengthy, impressive comments by the next class period. The students, however, must usually interpret these comments themselves--a situation which makes them feel more "alone with the language" than ever. Therefore, we need

a less exhausting but effective system that will (1) communicate to the students their strengths and thus build their self-confidence, (2) communicate their faults so as to make them aware of the difficulties--but not painfully so, and (3) give them this information as fast as we can--and, in addition, give them every opportunity to revise their writing before we finally evaluate their work with a grade. To find a way to meet these goals, I utilized the teaching methods of Roger Garrison, which are based on the revision process--that enjoys popularity these days. Garrison says that there is no "final" draft, only a "best" draft, the best draft there is at deadline time, and that this is the one which should receive the grade. In the "designer grading" system that I now use, there are three opportunities for revision, as described below. An instructor may choose to employ any or all of the elements of this method in order to make his teaching and/or grading--and thus his life--a little easier. He will be tired when he leaves his office--but pleasantly so. After a day of "designer grading," he will feel as one does after having taken a long, brisk walk.

The procedure is as follows (this is based on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday schedule):

Friday: A Wednesday-Thursday-Friday appointment schedule is circulated in class. Each student signs up for a fifteen-minute appointment on one of those days of the next week.

Monday: Students write their essays in the one-hour class period. No pre-writing exercises and/or notes are allowed in class. The papers are collected at the end of the hour.

Wednesday: The papers are returned (unmarked), and the students have the class hour in which to write their revisions. The papers are collected at the end of the hour. As soon as possible after Wednesday's class, individual grading sessions begin and are conducted as follows.

The student is asked to read the paper aloud--pen in hand. He may make any corrections he wishes as he reads. (The instructor does not comment on his work.) The instructor then goes about grading the paper by reading it aloud--the paper is on the desk so that the student can observe the grading process and hear explanations for the marks as they are made. This is a particularly valuable aspect of this kind of grading because both ESL and developmental students understand and respond to oral language much better than they do written language. It is personal; there is an instant dialogue--something that, traditionally, has been lacking in the English teacher-student relationship. (For so long, we have been the standard-bearers of what is right and wrong about writing. We have told our students what is and is not correct, but we have spent very little time talking about it--much less giving students time to ask, "Why is this incorrect?" Written comments on a paper which is handed back in class leave very little room for dialogue. In these days of personal items--personal computers, personal diet plans, personal fitness programs--tailored to "your" needs, why not have a personal English teacher? Each student should have one!)

USING ANTICIPATION GUIDES

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WANTED: A reading lesson format which will motivate students to read critically with a high level of comprehension, engage the entire class in productive conversation and promote cross-cultural exchange.

An English as a second language teacher's impossible dream? Maybe not, if an anticipation guide is used.

An anticipation guide consists of a few statements related to the themes or major concepts of a reading passage. Students react to the statements and then share these reactions in a structured discussion with a small group of other students (Moore, et al 1982). According to schema theory (Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977; Rumelhart, 1980), reading comprehension is enhanced because the statements activate the schema; that is, they pull out existing knowledge of the topic, thus developing a mental set (Jones, 1982). When the statements are based on values, stereotypes, misconceptions, or moral dilemmas, they stimulate lively discussions, cross-cultural interaction and critical thinking.

TABLE ONE
Sample Anticipation Guide

Read these statements. If you agree, write an A in the blank. If you don't agree, write a D.

_____1. Sometimes I have bad dreams about atomic (nuclear) war.

_____2. The things that happen after an atomic war would be so bad that it will never happen.

_____3. In my country people are afraid that the USSR and the USA will start an atomic war.

_____4. No one in the whole world wants an atomic war.

Written to accompany "What Will Atomic War Be Like?" from Time & Space: A Basic Reader (Connelly & Sims, 1982).

Classroom Procedure

In class students are presented with the statements and told to note their reactions and to be prepared to defend their positions. A large class (eight or more) should be divided into groups of four to six students to discuss their opinions. The discussion procedes in a very structured manner: One student reads statement number one to the others in the small group and explains his/her position. Then, taking turns, each person agrees or disagrees with the statement and explains

why. Then a second student reads statement number two, agrees or disagrees, and follows the same procedure. A third student reads statement number three, and so forth. In this way each student has the opportunity to express personal opinions in the small group. The more vocal students are not allowed to dominate, and the quiet students each have a turn to speak. Students should not be allowed to speak out of turn. One word of caution: the first time this is tried, it may take some time for all to really understand the procedure.

After the groups have finished discussing all the statements, the large group reconvenes and the teacher takes a tally of how many students agreed or disagreed with each statement. This gathering of opinions is very important for the students to see the full spectrum of positions possible on these issues, and it is helpful if the teacher models open acceptance of differences of opinion.

Next students make predictions about the passage they are about to read. They are given the title of the selection and are reminded that the statements they have been discussing relate to the passage. All predictions should be recorded on the blackboard or on a transparency so that they may serve as a true-false comprehension check after the reading. (See Table Two)

TABLE TWO
Sample Predictions

1. This story is about a war between the USA and the USSR.

2. The atomic war will be the end of the world.

3. The atomic war will be in Lebanon.

4. This will be about what causes the atomic war.

Now students read the passage. They should be actively involved in the reading process since their previous experience with the ideas has been called forth, they have had exposure to some significant vocabulary, and they have made an investment in the reading by both taking a stand on the statements and by making predictions. Consequently, their comprehension should be at a high level.

After all have read the passage, the predictions are used to check comprehension with the large group. Students are encouraged to change false statements into true ones — another way of using and revising English. (See Table Three)

TABLE THREE
Comprehension Check

F 1. This story ~~is about~~ says a war between the USA and the USSR may be an atomic war.

F 2. Perhaps The atomic war will be the end of the world.

F 3. I hope The atomic war will not be in Lebanon.

F 4. This will be about what ~~causes~~ happens in an atomic war.

After this comprehension check, it may be appropriate to discuss in small groups either the author's possible stand on the statements in the anticipation guide, or the ways in which students' opinions may have changed, or both. The format of the anticipation guide could include columns to record these reactions as well. (See Table Four)

TABLE FOUR
Alternate Formats

Before	Friedan		
____	____	1.	Women in the USA have the easiest life in the world.
____	____	2.	Housewives usually feel bored, incomplete and empty.
____	____	3.	Men still oppress women in all countries.
____	____	4.	If all women have jobs outside the home the problems will disappear.

"The Problem that Has No Name" from Reflections (Griffin & Dennis, 1979).

Before	Author	After		
____	____	____	1.	To be rich is to be happy.
____	____	____	2.	The economy of each nation depends on the economies of all other nations.
____	____	____	3.	Countries which have oil to export are victims.
____	____	____	4.	The environment must be protected even if the economy suffers.

"A Classier Set of Problems" from American Kernal Lessons-Advanced (O'Neill et al, 1981).

Preparation

One practical advantage to using anticipation guides is the minimal preparation time involved for the teacher. First, the teacher selects the concepts or themes in the reading to be emphasized and then writes four to eight statements which are both controversial and open to interpretation. Sometimes it is appropriate to write misleading statements since creating a mis-match between preconceived notions and the actual reading passage encourages critical reading. Then the teacher simply presents the statements to the students on a handout or even on the blackboard or overhead transparency.

Variations

It is possible to develop anticipation guides with a wide variety of material, including passages in readers, newspapers or magazine articles, short stories or even novels. The guides may also be used

with other media: films, filmstrips, video or audio cassettes, TV programs or lectures.

The reading does not have to take place during the class time. One class period could be devoted to discussing the statements and making predictions. The reading could be assigned for homework, and the predictions could be checked the following class meeting. When another prereading activity is used with a reading selection, a similar guide could be used after the reading. In this case, technically, the statements form a reasoning guide (Herber, 1978).

Discussion

When anticipation guides are used, the teacher does not have to ask questions; hence the class time is more student-centered. Students are involved in monitoring their own comprehension and may begin to see that in many cases there is more than "one correct answer." Several components of language proficiency are integrated into one lesson, as well as several reading skills and strategies. Those who have participated in classes or demonstrations using anticipation guides have found the time to be productive and interesting. Total class involvement, lively cross-cultural interaction, critical thinking and improved reading comprehension may be the result of using anticipation guides.

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A PROPOSAL FROM MACY MCKEE:

Dear Editor:

The review of Academic English in your May 1984 issue prompts me to write with a suggestion. It seems to me that many of us need a place to exchange information and query/comment beyond the initial stage of one book review. I would like to tell what I do with this text, why the features criticized by Martha Clough do not bother me, what aspects or lacks do bother me, etc., and I would like to know what others have done to supplement this book. Although I do not often like a book as much as I do this one, whenever I hear about someone else's use of a book I also use, I always wish that I could talk to that person and get details. I know of no TESOL publication which offers its readers such a forum for exchanges of bits and pieces, or of whole course syllabi should anyone desire. The former Curriculum Clearing House Newsletter "Author's Corner" is not what I have in mind; I am more interested in what other users do with a text, particularly users whose teaching situations are similar to mine.

The general tone of TECFORS makes it appear to me to be written and read by people whose interests are akin to mine. Its focus on matters related to teaching makes it seem a possible vehicle for such a communicative outlet. Therefore, I would like to propose that you establish a column in which readers could make comments or ask questions about materials, methods and curricula mentioned in previous issues. I am enclosing my comments about Academic English as a sample of what I mean.

Academic English (reviewed in TECFORS, May 1984, by Martha Clough)

I agree in essence with the reviewer; however, the problems mentioned are not those which loom large to me, perhaps because I seem to be constitutionally incapable of teaching a single text from page 1 to END. I assume that a text will need supplementation; I look for texts that are worth supplementing. This text is nearly ideal for the type of course that we offer at the most advanced level in the Institute. It lends itself to use in any order desired, and much of the work within it can be done without the lecture/reading on a specific topic that sets the tone of the chapter. The most obviously lacking content area is that of Computer Science, one of our largest majors, and only one unit is directly relevant to Business, our largest group. Supplementation in Business is no problem, for there are several good ESL texts or pieces of material, but supplementation in Computer Science is not easy. In our case, it has led to an entire ESP offering on CS, and we now also have a course for Business/Economics majors.

One of the greatest strengths of this text is its inclusion of listening comprehension via lectures and information transfer tasks. Work with these, specifically the paragraph lecture on continental drift, has given rise to the current format of the listening part of our placement test (described in Teachers, Texts, and Technology in Language Education Review, October, 1984, in press). We have supplemented the text with the Newbury "modules", which are longer and which have more extensive accompanying exercises, and we also use a number of real speakers, who give us reading materials related to their topics (topics of interest to the students in the particular class), for which we create tasks. We have also created materials of our own.

Another good point of this text is that it is American. Although, in this university, we do not worry much about the "-ise" and "-our" spellings and some well-known grammar differences between British and American English, other grammar items are a concern, and the British abandonment of the comma is a real problem in upper level courses, where often suitable punctuation is one of our best clues to the level of the student's grasp of the structure and its meaning. (Incidentally, dealing with the computer has made me even more conscious of the need for proper attention to punctuation and its spacing, for it cannot guess what the student meant to do, either while word-processing or while programming.)

This is a text which I would recommend to anyone concerned with academic writing (and reading and listening). We would be delighted to share our material collection with others and to receive their ideas and/or materials.

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We at TECFORS are delighted to accept Macy McKee's proposal. We invite other readers to send responses to the methods, materials, and curricula discussed in TECFORS.

TECFORS is published five times a year--in January, March, May, September and November.

Send subscription requests ($4.00 per year; $7.00 for two years; $6.50 per year abroad or $12.00 for two years abroad) to Nancy V. Lee at her address below. Manuscripts and correspondence may be sent to any of the editors. Articles should normally be a maximum of four double-spaced typewritten pages and should be mailed with a stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed. Longer articles are welcome if they can be divided into a series.

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